

T H E
BOOK of MARTYRS:
R O R,
Compleat History of Martyrdom,
FROM THE
Crucifixion of our Blessed SAVIOUR,
TO THE
P R E S E N T T I M E S.

The Noble Army of MARTYRS praise Thee.
LITURGY.

V O L. I.



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P R E F A C E.

IN an age when irreligion, on the one hand, and every Jesuitical art on the other, tend to subvert the PROTESTANT RELIGION, it may not be amiss to present the world with the history of that HOLY ARMY of MARTYRS, who, for the sake of their religion, and in imitation of their blessed Redeemer, have chearfully sustained the most cruel kinds of death which the malice of their enemies could inflict: “ They “ were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were “ tempted, were slain with the sword, were tortured, not accepting deliverance;” they had “ trials of cruel mockings and scourgings, of “ bonds and imprisonments:” all which things are recorded for our example, that having done our duty, and continued stedfast in the faith, we may partake with them the glories of that kingdom, where malice and envy shall for ever cease, and joy, and love and peace abound for evermore.

With regard to former books on this subject, it will be sufficient to observe, that none of them are compleat in their kind.----Some of them have been written so long ago, that the language is grown obsolete, and those of a more modern date comprehend only the MARTYRS of particular periods. ---- In a word, a COMPLEAT
MAR-

MARTYROLOGY has never yet been offered to the **PUBLIC**; it is therefore hoped that this **WORK** will meet with the encouragement which the Editors will make it their study to deserve.

Let us all then, as far as our several situations in life will admit, imitate the examples of these Holy Men in past ages; and may the God of mercy enable us, in every difficulty of life, to rely entirely on his divine providence; and to give constant praise to that God, who when all other help shall fail us, is "alone able to deliver."

BOOK

BOOK of MARTYRS.

I Cannot more properly introduce this work to the candid attention of my readers, than by observing that I shall pass over un-noticed all accounts of those False Saints and Pretended Martyrs which have crowded the Roman Kalendar. On the contrary, the intention of the following volumes is to present the Protestant world with a succinct and candid history of those blessed Martyrs, who, for the sake of religion have chearfully sustained the most cruel kinds of death which the malice of their enemies could inflict. Wherefore at the head of this Holy Army it will be proper to place the great Captain of our Salvation, the Author and Finisher of that Faith which we profess, and the best pattern of that conduct which it will be our highest honour and happiness to imitate.

The LIFE of our Blessed Lord and Saviour
J E S U S C H R I S T.

IN the sacred writings, we read, that after the completion of the several prophecies of the Messiah, the Almighty dispatched his angel to a virgin of Galilee, to the city of Nazareth, to salute her, with the glad tidings, that by the miraculous influence of the Holy Spirit of God, she should be with child, and in due time should bring forth the promised seed, who was to become the Redeemer of the World; and of whom all mankind was at that time in great expectation, insomuch that the

Roman senate, greatly alarmed, issued a decree, altho' never executed, "That no male born that year, should be brought up, but exposed;" supposing the infant then to be born, would become, as they understood the prophecies, the temporal lord of the universe; thus was a persecution raised against our Lord, even before he was born. At the same time an harbinger, John the Baptist, was also miraculously born, and sent by God, to prepare the way for this Prince of Peace.

At this time, Augustus the Roman emperor, having published a decree, that all persons, subject to the Roman empire, should be taxed, and registered, in the places to which they belonged; this caused the virgin mother, then near her time, with her espoused husband, to take a journey of upwards of sixty miles from their home, to a small town called Bethlehem, which was the head of the tribe of Judah, of which tribe they both were, to be there registered. This happened in the year of the world 4004, and about 754 years from the building of Rome.

It was, according to the commonly received opinion, towards the latter end of December, when Joseph, with his wife Mary, the mother of our Lord, arrived at Bethlehem, and tho' they might have expected to have found a decent entertainment, yet, so great was the concourse of people come thither, upon the same occasion, that they could procure no better lodging than a stable; and here it was, that on the 25th of December, she was delivered of her holy burthen, herself, for want of better help, performing the office of a midwife, and dressing the child, she laid it in the manger. Thus was Christ the King of kings born into the world, without any, even the necessary attendants of the time, to assist and administer to him; but altho' human attendance was wanting at his birth, yet the angels of God saw and worshipped, singing, "Glory to God and Peace to Mankind." A choir also of the heavenly

venly hosts, at the same time, declared his birth to certain shepherds in the adjacent fields, who forthwith left their flocks and repaired to the town, telling to all they met, what they had seen and heard ; altho' it was, at that time, taken but little notice of by the people of Bethlehem.

A.D. 1. On the eighth day after his birth, our Lord, according to the law of Moses, was circumcised, and at forty day's end, was, by his mother, presented in the temple to God, and redeemed by a pair of turtle doves, according to the law, his mother being but poor and unable to offer a lamb. When old Simeon, who had long waited for the redemption of Israel, it having been revealed to him from heaven, that he should not die before he saw the person in whom it should be fulfilled ; and Anna, an ancient prophetess, both prophesied of the Child then presented, and declared him to be the Messiah, the Saviour of Israel.

After the performance of these legal ceremonies, he was, by his parents, carried back to Bethlehem, when that persecution began against him, which never afterwards ceased, till it deprived him of his life ; for Herod, then king of Jerusalem, was greatly alarmed : for

A. D. 2. About this time, certain kings from the eastern country, probably out of Arabia, from the descendants of Abraham by Keturah, who had observed a new star, which, according to their knowledge in astronomy, and an ancient prophecy, probably that of Balaam, well known in the East, foretold to them that the long expected Prince, the Redeemer of the world was now born : they, by the guidance of this new star, came to Jerusalem, and made enquiry for him that was now born King of the Jews. Their publick character, appearance, and knowledge in astronomy, so roused the jealousy of Herod, that he resolved to counteract the decrees of heaven, and destroy this potent rival, sent from God, in his

infancy. To this end, he immediately called an assembly of the Jewish elders ; and, being by them informed, that the birth place of the Messiah was to be at Bethlehem, he dismissed his royal guests thither, desiring them that when they had found this royal Infant, they would return and tell him, that he also might pay his adoration to this heavenly King. The wise men departed for Bethlehem, and in their journey were again saluted by the star, they had before seen, which now went before them, and stood over the house where the young child was, when they entered in, and notwithstanding the mean appearance of both the mother and the son, presented him their gifts, gold and precious odours ; and paid their homage to him ; thus was he manifested both to the Jews and to the Gentiles. These eastern princes having performed their homage, purposed, according to their promise, to have returned back to Herod, but being warned by God to the contrary, returned to their own country by another way : and at the same time, the Almighty by his angel, informed Joseph, that Herod would seek the young Child, to destroy him, and therefore ordered him to depart out of the dominions of that tyrant, to go down into Egypt, and to remain there, till he should call him back, which Joseph immediately obeyed, and took his wife and the young child, and set out on a journey of above 200 miles ; the gold lately presented by the wise men, being now of excellent use to them in travelling. Being arrived in Egypt, and the Child Jesus, as is reported, being carried into the temple at Heliopolis, the idol gods fell down before him, like Dagon heretofore, at the presence of the ark.

Herod, having waited some time for the return of the wise men, and finding himself deluded, and his secret policy to kill his rival defeated, fell into the most violent rage and fury, and resolving to attain by severity, what had been denied to his policy, he issued

issued the most bloody mandate, and perpetrated the most barbarous cruelty, that ever tyrant could invent; and such as would have shocked every other breast, but his own: he sent out his soldiers, and slew, in one day, all the children of the city of Bethlehem, and the neighbouring towns, that were of two years of age and under; in which massacre there perished no less than 14000 innocent infants, and among others, a nurse child of the tyrant's own; which caused Augustus, when he heard thereof, to say, "He had rather be Herod's hog than his son;" the religion of his nation being a security to swine, but no religion; no tie, however sacred, could secure his son. Thus were these infants, the first martyrs for the sake of Christ; and so dying, they are celebrated by the Christian church, and a day annually kept in commemoration thereof, the 28th of December. Shortly after this, the tyrant was visited by the vengeance of heaven, and died, being eaten up of worms, and stinking in so terrible a manner, that, none hardly, could come near him to assist him.

A. D. 9. About seven years after, Joseph being again informed by an angel, of the death of Herod, returned into the land of Palestine, but hearing that Archilaus, the son of Herod, reigned in Jerusalem, he was afraid to settle there, and therefore, went to his former habitation at Nazareth, from whence, our Saviour was called a Nazarene. From this time, till our Lord was twelve years of age, we have no mention made of him.

A. D. 12. His parents, who every year attended the usual feasts of the Jews, at the temple: when our Lord was 12 years old took him along with them to Jerusalem, and having performed the accustomed ceremonies, they returned, accidentally leaving the youth behind, not doubting, but that he had joined himself to some of the company, and therefore travelled on till night, without enquiring after

him, and then making a diligent search in the company, and not finding him, nor hearing of him, they returned with sorrow to the city, to seek him there: where, on the third day after he had been missing, to their great surprize, they found him in the temple, disputing with the doctors, hearing them and propounding questions to them. His mother, upon seeing him, telling him with what impatience they had sought him, received for answer, that he had been employed in his duty, in the house and business of his Father; an answer not at all then understood. However he returned with his parents to Nazareth, lived with them, and as he increased in stature and mind, so also, he grew more and more in favour, both with God and man.

A. D. 26. About this time Joseph the reputed father of our Lord died; and our Saviour, who, as is generally believed, all this time worked with his father at his trade of a carpenter, now took his father's business, and set up for himself, as is plain from St. Mark, ch. vi. 3. where he is directly styled the carpenter. This occupation he followed till the time of his manifestation, which was in the 30th year of his life.

A. D. 30. A little before, our Lord made his publick entrance on his office, John the Baptist appeared, preaching unto mankind repentance from their sins, crying, in the words of the prophet Isaiah, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord," declaring, that all flesh should shortly see the salvation of God; and that the kingdom of God was nigh at hand; gaining by the boldness and energy of his preaching, many profelytes of all ranks, whom he admitted into his new institution by baptism. These were the first dawnings of the gospel, and John was the morning star, of that sun of righteousness which was now about to arise.

After

After John had preached some time, our Lord leaving Nazareth, thought fit to enter on his prophetic office; and in order thereto, came to Judea, where John was baptizing; and tho' he was without sin, yet he offered himself to John, then on the banks of Jordan, to be baptized by him; when the Baptist, who had never before seen him, by inspiration knowing him, refused the office, telling him he had need to be baptized by him. Jesus replied, it was nevertheless now necessary, that he might fulfil all righteousness, and going into the water was baptized; when immediately the heavens were opened, and the spirit of God visibly descended from heaven, like a dove, and rested upon him; and a voice was heard from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased." Thus, by the unction of the Holy Ghost and by the testimony of God, was he installed in his ministerial office. This has been supposed to have been on January the 6th, when our Lord had fully compleated 30 years; and which was the time of entering on the Jewish priesthood.

Our Lord now fully prepared for his prophetic office, was, by the impulse of the Spirit, driven into the wilderness of Judea, a most miserable dry and barren place, encompassed with rocky mountains, so torn, rent and disordered, that the dismal prospect shews as if nature had there suffered some strange convulsions, and the bowels of the earth were turned outwards; there he remained forty days and forty nights without sustenance, surrounded by wild beasts, and insulted by various assaults of the tempter; after which time, we are told, he was an hungred, when, the devil thinking that a proper opportunity, set upon him with a threefold temptation, imagining him, tho' a supernatural one, yet to be but a man, and that he might therefore, perhaps, now succeed as well as he had done heretofore; and therefore tempted him, first, to despair,
and

and putting him to prove himself the son of God, by turning the stones of the wilderness into bread, to assuage his hunger ; secondly, by trying how far presumption and pride would carry him ; and lastly, by trying the power of his ambition, and how far the desire of wealth and honour would work upon him ; all which, as well as most of the other acts of our Lord, are faithfully recorded by the Evangelists, in the New Testament ; and therefore it may suffice, in this treatise, to take notice only of the most material passages of that life, which this whole work would not contain, and of whom St. John says, that were all his actions recorded, “ the whole world would not contain the books that might be written of him.”

Our Lord having resisted the devil, and triumphed over him, the angels came and administered to his necessities.

During the continuance of Christ in the desert, the Jewish Sanhedrim sent messengers to John, to enquire who he was, whether the Christ or Elias his forerunner, to whom he returned for answer, That he was neither, but that prophet foretold by Isaiah, who was to prepare the way for the Messiah.

The day after the departure of these messengers, Jesus returned from the desert, and came to Bethabara, where John then was, who, upon seeing him, cried out to his auditors, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world ; alluding to the lamb for the daily sacrifice, and pointing to him, added, that this was the person of whom before he had said so much, and on whom he had seen the Spirit of God descend ; upon this our Lord retired ; but the next day, about sun-set, passing by the place where John was standing, with some of his disciples, he again pointed him out to them, upon which, two of them, one Andrew, and the other supposed to be John, immediately followed

ed him, and coming up to him, saluted him by the name of Rabbi, a name given to no ordinary personage, and desired to know where he lodged, when he courteously invited them home with him, where they staid that night. His conversation had such an effect upon Andrew, that he went to his elder brother Simon, and told him he had found the long expected Messias, and brought him to Jesus. Our Lord called him immediately by his name, and declared unto him his parentage, and afterwards changed his name from Simon to Cephas, or Peter, which signifies a stone. Thus was he made known to three of his disciples, tho' they were not publickly called to that office 'till about a year after. The day following Jesus crossed the river and arrived in Galilee, where he found a person named Philip, an inhabitant of Bethsaida, whom he commanded to follow him. Philip brought to him an intimate of his, called Nathanael, generally thought to be Bartholomew, who upon his acquainting him that he had found the Messiah; Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph and Mary, seemed something doubtful, and asked, if any good could come out of Nazareth; on which Philip bade him come and satisfy himself. Nathanael coming to Christ, he immediately stiled him, An Israelite without guile; a name which probably his neighbours had given him, on the account of his integrity; telling him that he saw him under the fig-tree, before Philip found him there; this so convinced Nathanael, that he immediately declared him to be the Son of God; upon which our Lord told him that as so small a matter had convinced him, he should see greater things to confirm him.

The day following, Jesus thought proper to give a farther and greater manifestation of his divine power, and to confirm the faith of his new disciples, and being at a wedding feast, of a poor, tho' holy couple, at a little town called Cana, not far from Nazareth, and probably one of his own relations, the

wine

wine being wholly out, tho' he had before denied the request of his mother, who was also there, to replenish it ; yet when it was plain that it was really wanted, he ordered the attendants to fill six large water pots with water : they immediately obeyed, and filled them up to the brim, when the water was forthwith changed into the best of wine, in such a manner, that it was impossible that there should have been any collusion. This was his first miracle, whereby he manifested his glory to his mother, his relations, and his disciples, and it was a great confirmation of their faith. After this he departed thence with his mother, his cousins, and his disciples, and went and dwelt at Capernaum, the capital of Galilee ; which place he afterwards made his chief residence. At this time, he stayed not above three weeks' at Capernaum, before he went up to Jerusalem, to the passover, which then happened on the 6th day of April, about 3 months after his baptism.

Being arrived at Jerusalem at the feast of the passover, the most publick time of the whole year, and when there was the greatest number of people gathered together, our Lord began to shew himself to the people, and set about reforming of a publick and scandalous abuse and prophanation of the temple, it being at this time required by the law that all men should eat the passover ; and likewise, that every male above 20 years of age should offer half a shekel to the Lord. This occasioned all who came from any distance, to want to purchase sacrifices at Jerusalem, and frequently to exchange foreign coin into currency ; for which purpose, the outward court of the temple, or the court of the Gentiles, had thro' the avarice of the rulers been turned into an exchange and a market place, under a pretence, that the sacrifices might be more handy, altho' in fact, to satisfy the covetous desires of the avaricious rulers, and the better to extort money from the people,
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and out of a contempt to the Gentile converts, who worshipped there, and whom the Jews looked upon in no better light than the beasts. Our Saviour looking on this practice as scandalous and prophane, procured a scourge of small cords, drove all the traders and their beasts out of the sacred place, and overthrew the tables of the exchange brokers, and coming to the dove-sellers, he said unto them, Take these things hence, and make not my Father's house an house of merchandize. His taking so much authority upon himself, greatly surprized and angered the Jews, who demanded of him, By what authority he did those things? and what miracle he could bring to evidence his commission for acting in this manner? To which he returned, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will rebuild it. This he spake of his own body, and of his death and resurrection; but the Jews, supposing him to speak of the fabrick of the temple, in which they then were, answered, That that temple, had already taken up forty six years in building and was not then fully finished; and therefore how could he build it in three days? This we may look upon as a sample of the manner in which our Lord shewed himself to the Jews, which was generally by such a manifestation of himself, in such manner, as could not be understood by all men, because he would not occasion them to shorten the course of his ministry; but such as carried in itself evidence to convince all well disposed persons that he was the son of God.

Tho' our Lord refused shewing any miracle at the instigation of the Jews, yet he wrought many before the people; and from this his first shewing himself at Jerusalem, he continued for the space of three years working miracles, preaching to the people, and doing good unto all men, making the blind to see, and the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, and the lame to walk: healing the sick, cleansing

cleansing the lepers, casting out devils, and doing such works as none other ever did or could do ; altho' he was all that time despised and maliciously spoken against, by almost the whole body of the Jews, by the scribes, the pharisees, and the priests ; and, as himself testifies, had scarce a place where to lay his head.

The manner in which our Lord began to shew himself to the Jews, excited the curiosity of one of their rulers, named Nicodemus, so much, that at night, he privately repaired to Jesus, declaring his belief of his being a teacher sent from God, of which his miracles were a sufficient testimony ; Jesus then acquainted him, that such a belief alone was not sufficient to bring him to God ; and then proceeded to open to him, the Christian doctrines of the new birth, baptism, faith, obedience, and the love of truth, insomuch that he became a faithful, tho' a secret disciple, for fear of the Jews.

John still continued his ministry, and as the fame of our Lord increased, a contest arose between his disciples and the Jews concerning baptism ; which the Baptist silenced, by telling them, that himself was but the fore-runner of that great person, as he had before declared ; and that himself must decrease, but the other must increase, concluding, that whosoever believed on the Son of God he should enjoy eternal life. John having diligently performed his ministry, repaired to the court of Herod, where he boldly rebuked the tyrant for his vices, especially for cohabiting with Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, at whose instigation he was cast into prison, and afterwards beheaded. The church celebrates his memory on the 24th day of June ; being the day of his nativity.

Our Lord now growing famous for his miracles, the Jews began to exert all their malice against him, giving out that he was a blasphemer, and a prophane person, and imputed his miracles ; where-
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in the finger of God evidently appeared, to the power of the devil. Our Lord however justified himself and confuted all their malicious aspersions by his discourses.

Some time after our Lord's entrance on his ministry, about the feast of Pentecost, which was the time the law was promulgated to the Israelites on mount Sinai, he thought proper to make a publick election of some particular persons from amongst his followers for more special employments, both to be witnesses of his actions and discourses, and after his departure to be his vicegerents upon earth, founders of his church, and publishers of his gospel. In order to this, he withdrew into a solitary mountain, at a little distance from Capernaum, where he then resided, afterwards called the mount of Christ. Here he continued all night in solemn address to Heaven for success on this important work, leaving thereby an example to the governors of his church, how to proceed on the like occasion. The next morning he made choice of twelve persons, according to the number of the twelve patriarchs of Israel, whom he stiled **APOSTLES**, which signifies a special messenger. The names of these were, 1. Simon, the son of Jonah, whom Jesus surnamed Peter, a fisherman of Bethsaida, tho' now an inhabitant of Capernaum; he was the oldest of all the apostles; and therefore our Lord gave him the precedeny, tho' not the superiority over the rest. 2. Andrew, a brother of Peter, of the same town and employment, formerly a disciple of St. John the Baptist. 3. James, called James the Great, of the same occupation, and partner with the two brothers. 4. John, younger brother to James, and the youngest of all the apostles, formerly a disciple to St. John the Baptist, and partner with his brother in trade. These two were near relations to our Lord, and were by him named **Boanerges**, or sons of thunder, on account of

their undaunted tempers. 5. Philip of the same town and business; he was the first disciple called by our Lord. 6. Bartholomew, most probably the same with Nathanael, supposed to have been skilled in the Jewish law. 7. Matthew, called also Levi, a rich publican or tax-gatherer at Capernaum, said to have been born at Nazareth. 8. Thomas, called also Didymus, which signifies a twin, a Galilean and fisherman. 9. James, called the Less, son of Cleophas and Mary, cousin-german, if not sister, to the blessed Virgin, the Mother of our Lord; for which reason he is often called the brother of our Lord. 10. Simon the Canaanite, from Cana the supposed place of his birth. 11. Judas, commonly called Jude, brother to James the Less, and kinsman to our Lord. 12. Judas Iscariot, or of Kerioth, an ancient place in Judea, of whom we have no other account, than that which so justly merits him the name of the Traitor.

Our Lord having thus chosen the proper persons to settle his church, and to publish his gospel to the world, not as human wisdom dictated, which would have made choice of the best Rabbins, the acutest philosophers, and most excellent orators, who by reasoning and eloquence might have subdued the stubbornness of the Jews, and confounded the subtle speculations of the Greek and Roman philosophers: but our Lord took contrary methods, the men he chose were mean and illiterate, ignorant of what they were to do, and in expectation of some worldly advantages, the most despised part, of the most despised nation, by whose ministry it was that the world was to be reformed, and by that means the Glory of God made the more conspicuous.

After this our Lord descended into the plain, and preached to the people that most excellent discourse called the sermon upon the mount, and continued

tinued working miracles and healing by his word all manner of diseases.

Soon after this, leaving Capernaum, he came to a little town of Galilee called Nain, where at the gate he was met by the corpse of a young man, the only son of a poor widow, bringing out to be buried, with a number of people attending on the funeral; the sight of this sorrowful widow so moved the compassion of our Lord, that he bade her cease her tears, and commanding the bearers to stand still, he went and touched the corpse, saying unto it, "Young man, I say unto thee, arise;" when the dead person immediately revived, sat up and spoke, and was delivered sound to his mother. This was the first person that Christ raised from the dead; a thing so surprising, that it struck the whole multitude with wonder, who gave praise to God, crying out that a mighty prophet was risen up among them; and that God had visited his people. The same whereof was spread thro' all Judea, and the neighbouring provinces.

After having gone about thro' several places, working miracles and spreading the gospel, our Lord returned again to Capernaum, where he was accosted by one Jairus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, whose daughter lay at the point of death, desiring him to come and save his child's life. Our Lord complied with his request; but as he was in the way towards his house, was met by a woman who had been troubled twelve years with an unnatural flux of blood, who was cured by the touch of his garment; this caused some delay, our Lord taking occasion therefrom to instruct the people: during this delay the young woman died, and a message was brought to her father, that his daughter was dead; but Jesus bade him fear nothing, only believe; and approaching the house, they found the mourners already assembled, lamenting her death; he desired them to desist, telling them she

was not dead but only asleep ; but they derided him as being in themselves assured that she was dead. Our Lord then chusing out Peter, James and John, the three he generally made use of on any extraordinary occasion, taking also the father and the mother he dismissed the rest, and entered the room where the corpse lay, when taking her by the hand, he commanded her to arise ; at which powerful words she sat up, and he delivered her to her mother, and ordered that something should be given her to eat. Then, enjoining the parents to silence, in regard to this miracle, either because that place had by their behaviour forfeited the benefit of his revelations, or because he would not hasten the effects of the incurable malice of the scribes and pharisees, he departed thence.

From this time our Lord daily continued his publick ministry as before, preaching to the people, working miracles, and opening to his apostles and disciples the nature of his kingdom, and their mission; when many of them finding they were disappointed in their worldly advantages which they had expected, forsook him, and never followed him afterwards.

A. D. 32. Our Lord began his ministry this year, with a publick visitation of all the towns in Galilee, and observing the numerous throngs of people that followed him ; and seeing them like sheep without a shepherd, said to his disciples, that the harvest was truly great, and the reapers but few. For this reason he sent out his disciples, two and two, to preach the kingdom of God, and that the Messiah was at hand, to all the cities of Judea, commanding them to take neither money nor provision for their journey ; but into whatsoever town they should enter, they should offer peace to that place ; and if they did not receive them, their blessing should return to them again ; and that it should be more tolerable for the people of Sodom and Gomorrah

morrah in the day of judgment, than for the inhabitants of that place. Thence he proceeded to shew them the consequences of their ministry, especially after his leaving the world ; that they were not to expect honours, or worldly advantages, but on the contrary persecutions, being sent out as sheep among wolves ; and that they were not to look for better treatment from the world, than what their master received.

Our Lord having, about this time, heard of the decollation of John the Baptist, as his time was not yet come, ordered his disciples to get ready a ship, and crossed the sea of Galilee, into a desert near to Bethsaida, where they might retire and rest themselves for a while ; hither he was followed by a great multitude, to the number of 5000, all of whom he miraculously fed with five barley loaves and two small fishes, which so astonished them that they declared that he was really the prophet that should come into the world ; and fixed a resolution to set him up for a king by force ; but Jesus knowing the mischief that would ensue from such an action, ordered his disciples, who probably were too willing to join them, to take shipping and go to Capernaum, whilst he himself dismissed the multitude, and retired into a desert place.

Some time after this, and many other miracles, our Lord thought fit to make trial of the faith and understanding of his apostles ; to which end, taking them privately to the northern parts of Galilee, he demanded of them, What the general opinion of the world was of him ? and being answered, That some took him to be John the Baptist risen from the dead, (among whom was Herod :) some Elias, some Jeremias, or some one of the ancient prophets restored again to life. He then demanded, Their real opinion of him ? Simon Peter, in the name of them all, answered, That he was the Messiah, the Son of God ; upon which Christ

pronounced him Blessed ; declaring that there-upon he should build his church, and that the gates of hell should not prevail against it. Our Lord next began to prepare his disciples for his sufferings and to acquaint them with his death and passion ; and to remove all thoughts of any worldly greatness from their minds, declared, that whosoever would be his disciple must take up his cross and follow him ; concluding that there were some then present, who should live to see the beginning of his kingdom ; which he spoke relative to his ascension, and coming to take vengeance on the Jewish nation. About a week after Christ had given to his followers the doleful account of his humiliation, he thought proper to reveal to them a specimen of his future exaltation in glory ; and taking Peter, James and John, his three favourite disciples, he went up into an high mountain, probably Tabor, where being earnest in prayer, he became transformed in their presence, a radiant glory darting from his face, and his person shining with a splendor exceeding the sun in his meridian lustre ; and at the same time there appeared with him two persons of great glory, in the likeness of Moses and Elias, familiarly talking with him of his sufferings, death and future glory. This vision so astonished Peter, that in an holy extasy he cried out, Master ! it is good for us to be here, and let us here erect three tents, one for thee, one for Moses, and one for Elias. While Peter continued talking with his Master, the two bright forms departed, and Jesus was left alone, and a bright and shining cloud suddenly surrounded them, from whence there came a voice, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him. This struck the three apostles with an awful dread ; but the cloud vanishing, their fears were dispelled ; and descending from the mountain with their Mas-

ter, he gave them a strict charge not to discover what they had seen, till after the resurrection.

From hence Jesus went to Capernaum, where he paid the accustomed dues to the temple, and worked a miracle to raise the money, which was voluntarily brought by a fish to the hook of Peter, whom his Lord sent out to angle for this purpose. As they were on the way thither, his disciples had disputed among themselves concerning precedence in the kingdom of heaven ; and being come into the house, Jesus, to check their ambition, declared to them, that he who would be greatest among them, must become the servant to the rest ; and taking a little child, whom some suppose to have been Ignatius, he set him in the midst of them, telling them, that he who would be greatest in the kingdom of heaven, must imitate the manners of that child, in innocence, humility, and purity of heart and life ; and that he who came nearest to him, should be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Hence our Lord proceeds to direct his followers in the forgiveness of injuries, one towards another ; and being asked by Peter, How often in a day he ought to forgive an offending brother, whether until seven times ? He answered, Not only until seven times, but until seventy times seven ; that is, toties quoties, as oft as he offendeth ; concluding, that unless we forgave our brother his trespasses, neither would our heavenly Father forgive us our trespasses.

Shortly after this, our Lord, in his passage to Jerusalem, whither he was going to celebrate the feast of tabernacles, coming to a village of Samaria, and being churlishly denied a lodging, it so provoked the two brothers James and John, whose fiery temper could not brook such incivility, that they desired leave of our Lord, that he would permit them to call down fire from heaven to consume such inhospitable wretches ; but Christ sharply rebuked them,

them, telling them, they knew not what manner of spirit they were of; for that the marks of his true disciples were meekness and love, and not fury and revenge; for the son of man was come to save, and not to destroy men's lives; and he went and took lodgings in the next village.

Some time after, Christ sent out his seventy disciples, to go and preach the gospel, in all the cities of the Israelites, in the same manner that he had before sent the twelve, to prepare his way, who now intended to make a fuller revelation of himself. Our Lord, at the same time, continued at Jerusalem, teaching in the temple, working miracles, and convincing many that he was Christ, the true Messiah, which so enraged the pharisees and the rulers of the Jews, that they sent officers to take him, and to bring him unto them; but they being charmed with his doctrine, returned to their masters, declaring, that never man spake like him; whereupon the pharisees upbraiding them for their neglect, and for being so foolishly seduced, to follow the errors of the populace, when not any one of the rulers had believed on him; on which Nicodemus, the secret disciple of Christ, mildly replied to the assembly, that they ought not to condemn any man unheard: but the pharisees angrily asked him, If he also was a follower of that Galilean? Bidding him search, and he would find, according to the proverb, no prophet ever came from Galilee. Thus the assembly broke up abruptly, without proceeding any farther against him, and every man returned to his own house.

Some time after this, his disciples finding their master earnest in prayer, desired him to teach them to pray, as John had taught his disciples to pray; when he, in compliance with their desires, gave them the same excellent form of prayer, as he had before done in his sermon upon the mount, and which still bears his name. Our Lord continued

nued now for some time in Jerusalem, and in the villages round about, working miracles, preaching the kingdom of God in various parables, confounding and putting to silence the subtle insinuations, blasphemous speeches and scandals of the pharisees, and their adherents; and exposing their pride, irreligion and covetousness.

A. D. 33. We are now arrived at the last year of Christ's publick ministry, when our Lord having departed from Jerusalem, received a message from the two sisters, Martha and Mary, at whose house in Bethany he had been entertained, and where, when he went to Jerusalem, he frequently lodged, as being but a short walk from the city; they now sent him word, that their brother Lazarus, for whom he had a great regard, lay at the point of death, and desiring him to come and heal him. But Jesus, purposing to give the greater proof of his divinity, and by a greater miracle to exalt the glory of God, staid two days before his departure, at the end of which, calling his disciples together, he told them, that Lazarus was fallen asleep, but he would go and awake him; the disciples not understanding him, he told them plainly he was dead; and that he was going to awake him from the sleep of death. In his journey, he in a plainer manner than he before had done, told his disciples of all that was likely to befall him shortly at Jerusalem. how that he should, by the malice of the Jews, be delivered over to the Gentiles, meet with the highest indignities, and in the end be crucified; but that on the third day he should rise again from the dead. In this journey it was, that Christ dined at the house of Zacheus the rich publican, who was so desirous to see him, that he had climbed up into a tree to see him pass by. When Christ was arrived at Bethany, he found that Lazarus had been dead four days, and being met by Martha, she told him, that if he had been there,

there, her brother had not died ; to which he answered, He should rise again ; which she understanding of the general resurrection, immediately consented thereto ; and going back to her sister Mary who was still in the house, together with many of the Jews who had come from Jerusalem to condole with the two sisters on so sorrowful an occasion ; upon Martha's privately telling her sister, that the Master was come, she got up and went out, the Jews following her, supposing, that as the custom then was, she was going to the tomb, to mourn there ; when she came to Jesus, she accosted him in the same manner her sister had done ; this mournful scene caused our Lord to sympathize with the rest, and drew tears from his eyes ; upon which some of the Jews remarked, How he loved him ! while others said, Could not this man who opened the eyes of the blind, have caused also that this man had not died ? Our Lord having comforted, by his discourse, the two sisters, came to the grave, which was a large cave and a stone laid at its mouth, which he commanded to be opened ; to which Martha replied, that the corpse must by this time smell, as it had been so long dead ; but Jesus, reproving her unbelief, bid her only believe and she should see the wonderful works of God. Then the stone being taken away, after a short ejaculation, he cried with a loud voice, " Lazarus come forth ! " and immediately at his call the dead arose, and came out of the tomb with his burying apparel upon him ; which being unloosed, he returned with Christ and the rest of the company to Bethany. This was the third person he had raised from the dead, and was a type and earnest of his own resurrection, which shortly after happened.

This miracle being reported, and strongly attested by several who had seen it, in Jerusalem, drew many over to Christ ; and a grand council being called, it was strongly debated, what was now to be

be done ; seeing, that if they let this man alone, the whole nation would believe on him, and the Romans, lest they should set him up for a king, would come upon them and destroy them ; when Caiphaz, the highpriest standing up, declared it to be his opinion, “ That one man ought to die, rather than the whole nation should perish ; ” and from that time, they sought for an opportunity to put him to death ; and not him alone, but Lazarus also, that they might thereby invalidate the miracle, by taking off the principal proof of it. Accordingly, they published an order, that if any man knew where Jesus was, he should apprehend him ; but our Lord, whose time was not yet fully accomplished, withdrew himself, for the present, out of their way.

Six days before the passover, our Lord returned to Bethany, and was gratefully entertained in the house of Lazarus, where as he sat at supper, Mary, to shew her love, brought a box of very precious ointment, and anointing the feet of Jesus, wiped them with the hair of her head, and the whole house was filled with the smell of the perfume. Judas the traitor chagrined at this extravagance, as he deemed it, reprimanded her for it, asking, Why all that waste was made, as that ointment might have been sold for a large sum, and the money better have been given to the poor ; This he spake, not that he himself cared for the poor, but as being treasurer, he might then have filched some part, to gratify his own avarice ; but Jesus reproving him, bade him not hinder her, seeing she done this against his burial, and that they had the poor always with them, but him they would not have much longer with them.

PALM SUNDAY, March the 29th.

Christ having continued all night at Bethany ; in the morning he purposed to go to Jerusalem, this being the day, in which the paschal lamb was taken
up,

up, and presented at Jerusalem; in imitation of which, our Lord intended this day to present himself in the temple, as the true Lamb of God, who was to take away the sins of the world; therefore leaving Bethany he came to the mount of olives, whence he sent two of his disciples into a neighbouring village, to fetch an ass and its colt for him to ride on, bidding them tell the owners, that the Lord had need of them. The disciples obeyed, and bringing the ass-colt to Jesus, they laid their cloaths upon it, and set him thereon; in which manner he rode to Jerusalem, thereby fulfilling the prophecy of Zachary (ch. ix. 9.) concerning him.

In the mean time, many of the people who were come to the feast, moved as it were by a divine impulse, upon hearing he was coming to Jerusalem, ran out to meet him, with branches of palm trees in their hands, crying out, "Hosannah to the son of David! Hosannah in the highest! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!" strewing the way, some with their garments, and others with branches from the trees; and all, singing the song of triumph to the son of David. At the foot of the mount of olives, our Lord, looking on the city, wept over it, at the same time foretelling the many evils and calamities that were coming upon it: and in that same place where he then stopped it was, that the Romans first pitched their tents, when they overthrew it. Being arrived at the gates, the whole city was in an uproar, every one desiring to see who it was that came so triumphantly; and upon enquiring, they were answered by the multitude that attended him, that it was Jesus, the great prophet of Nazareth.

The pharisees could not, without anger, see such triumphant honours paid to him, whose death they had resolved on; and some of them not able to conceal their resentment, with a seeming complaisance

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desired Jesus to silence his disciples ; to which he answered, That should they hold their tongues, the very stones would proclaim his honour. This heavenly King, to shew that his kingdom was spiritual and not temporal, repaired directly to the temple, where he again drove out the merchandizers, in the same manner as he had done 3 years before ; and having performed several miraculous cures, he preached to the people, and being in the middle of his discourse, seized with some perturbation of mind and horror, on account of his approaching passion, he cried out, " My soul is troubled, Father ! save me from this hour." But reflecting on the glory he was to receive, by his death, he added, " But for this cause, came I unto this hour ; Father glorify thy name ! At the same time, there came a voice from heaven, saying, " I have glorified it, and will glorify it again." This many mistaking for a clap of thunder, he let them understand, that this voice came for their sakes ; telling them, that now was the world judged, and the prince thereof, the Devil, was cast out, and continued to shew them, what influence his death should have upon all mankind. In the evening he returned, with his disciples, to his lodgings in Bethany.

The next day, Monday, March 30, he returned again to Jerusalem, as he did every day till Thursday, preaching to the people, in the temple, and confuting the subtilties of the scribes and pharisees, reproving their covetousness and hypocrisy, and confounding all their arguments ; staying in the city all the day, and in the evenings returning to Bethany.

Tuesday, March 31. The pharisees, determined, to seek all occasions to destroy the person, who thus boldly reproved and confounded them, and their doctrines, sent some of their people, accompanied with some Herodians, to propound to him some

ensnaring questions, that they might, from his answers, find matter of accusation against him; and having fixed upon one, which they thought could not fail, they came to him, and addressing themselves to him with the most artful insinuation, asked him, Whether it was lawful to pay tribute to the Roman emperor, or not? Had he answered this in the affirmative, the Jews would have abandoned him, as a betrayer of their liberties, and disclaiming his own sovereignty; if in the negative, the Herodians would have accused him as a rebel against the emperor. But our Lord, perceiving their subtilty, called for a Roman penny, which was the tribute money, which being given to him, he asked them, Whose image it bare? to which they replied, Cæsar's. Then, said he, "Render to Cæsar, the things that be Cæsar's, and unto God, the things that be God's." Which answer so confounded them, that, as they could find no fault with it, they left him with shame and silence. On the afternoon of this day, when Jesus was about to return to Bethany, his disciples desired him to take a view of the glorious structure and magnificence of the temple; upon which he took occasion to acquaint them, that the time was approaching, that not one stone of all that magnificent pile, should be left upon another. Being come to the mount of olives, in his way to Bethany, Peter, and some others of the apostles, asked him to tell them, What signs should precede the destruction of the temple? and when that should happen, which, they supposed, would be the beginning of the new world, and the temporal kingdom of the Messiah? Our Lord, in order to satisfy their curiosity, sat himself down, in full view of the city, and foretold them the several signs that should precede that day, as recorded by St. Luke and the other evangelists, which he compared to the destruction of the world; and concluded his dis-

discourse by recommending to them constancy and watchfulness in their duty, as apostles and followers of him ; and having ended his speech, got up and went to Bethany ; where supping with Simon the leper, who had been cured by him, Mary again repeated the anointing him, in the same manner as before, and was again reprimanded by Judas ; but Jesus commended her, saying, she had wrought a good work, in having embalmed his body to his burial ; and that wherever his gospel should be preached, her regard for him should also be there published. Supper being ended, our Lord, to give his disciples an example of love and humility, took a basin of water and a towel, and began to wash his disciples feet, when coming to Peter, he absolutely refused to suffer his Lord to perform such an office for him, till Jesus told him, that he had a spiritual intention therein ; and that, without this, he could have no part in him ; upon which he cried out, “ Lord, not my feet only, but my hands and my head.” Jesus having finished, again sitting down with them, recommended to them humility and brotherly love : and being moved at the prospect of his approaching sufferings, declared to them, that one of them should betray him : Peter hearing so plain a charge of treason against one of their body, was desirous to know the person, and beckoned to John, who was then leaning on our Lord’s bosom, to ask who it was, which he accordingly did, and received this private answer, That it was he to whom he should give a sop ; and then having dipped a sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot. Shortly after which, our Lord by way of irony, bade him do what he had to do quickly, and accordingly Judas went out ; but the other disciples knowing nothing of his design, supposed that our Lord had sent him to provide something for the feast, as he was cashier, or else to give something to the poor. After his departure,

our Lord strongly recommended to his disciples, that they should love one another, and telling them that he was going to a place whither they could not follow him, Peter declared that he would follow him, altho' he should lay down his life for his sake. Our Lord bade him not be too confident, and assured him, that even he, should deny him three times, within the usual time of the cock's crowing.

On the Wednesday, April 1. the grand Sanhedrim of the Jews assembled at the palace of Caiphas, to consult how they might take Jesus by stratagem, and put him to death; for they judged it not proper to do it publickly, especially at the time of the feast, lest it should cause a disturbance among the common people, by whom he was revered. In the height of their debates on this subject, came the traitor Judas, and put an end to their difficulties, by promising them, that for a sum of money, he would betray him unto them, at a time when he should be private, and removed from the populace, as he well knew all his secret places of retirement. This they gladly listened to, and presently agreed with him for thirty staters, about 3 l. 15 s. sterling, the common price given for slaves; which accomplished another prophecy of Zachary's, (ch. xi. 12.) Judas took the money, and from that time sought means to betray him.

Thursday, April 2. being the day of preparation for the passover, when the lamb was to be killed in the morning, the apostles knowing their Master to be strictly observant of this festival, desired to know where he would eat the passover; he forthwith dispatched Peter and John, to the city, to make ready for him; telling them, that they should meet a man with a pitcher of water, who, upon their telling him, that the Master intended to eat the passover at his house, should shew them

a spacious room, ready furnished, and fit for the purpose; the disciples went directly to the city, and found all things ready, as their master had told them; and having prepared a lamb, according to the law, and got every thing else in order for supper, they returned to their Master at Bethany.

Towards evening Christ came to Jerusalem, with his disciples, and at the usual time sat down to eat the passover; telling his disciples, that he had greatly desired to eat this passover, it being the last he should eat, till all things were fulfilled. Then taking a cup of wine, with which the paschal supper always began, he blessed it, drank of it, and then ordered his disciples to take and divide it among themselves; and having begun supper, he assured them a second time, that one of them should betray him.

This raised a general sorrow, and caused every one to ask, If he was the person? To which he answered, That it was the man who dipped his hand in the dish with him. Judas, who probably might, at that time, be helping himself to some of the lamb, boldly asked, If it was he? To which our Lord returned, "He had named the man." At the end of supper, when the third cup was drank, our Lord, instead of the passover, instituted the Christian sacrifice, called, "The Lord's supper," commanding his disciples to use the same, in remembrance of him. After supper he told Peter that Satan had desired to have him, that he might sift him as wheat; but that he had prayed for him, bidding him, when he had recovered, to strengthen his brethren. Peter, to shew his resolution, told his Master, that he was ready to follow him to prison and to death. But Jesus knowing his weakness, bid him not be too confident; for that, before the second cock crowing that night, he should deny him thrice. After some farther discourse between our Lord and his disciples, they proceeded

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to sing the accustomed hymn, or the great Hallelujah, which was a portion of the Psalms, beginning at the 113th, and ending with the 118th psalm; which being finished, and Christ having prayed for himself, his disciples, and all future Christians, he went out and left the city; passing over the brook Kidron, to a place called Gethsemane, where was a garden, whither he often retired; which place was well known to the traitor Judas. In the way, our Lord acquainted them, that now was going to be accomplished that prophecy of Zacharias, which says, "I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered;" for that now in his distress they should all forsake him: Peter again with vehemence affirmed, that altho' all the rest should forsake him, yet he would not: but our Lord the third time assured him, that he should certainly deny him that night, before the second crowing of the cock; Peter with great warmth declared, that although he should die with him, he would not deny him in any wise; in which he was joined by all the rest.

Being come to the garden, our Lord ordered his disciples to wait for him, whilst he himself accompanied by Peter, James and John, retired to a distance to pray, commanding them also to pray, that they might not be led away by temptations. Being entered the garden, he found his spirits greatly depressed, and said unto the three apostles "My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death;" he therefore desired them to watch with him, in this his terrible conflict, between the flesh and the spirit; then withdrawing from them about a stone's cast, he fell prostrate on the earth; and being in an agony, prayed unto his heavenly Father, that if it was possible, he would remove from him the bitter portion, he was now going to take; but reflecting with himself, he added, "Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done:" then returning to his disciples,

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he expected that his disciples might go away in safety. They then laid hands on him, and the disciples, willing to prove their promised courage, asked their Lord if they should use defensive means, and Peter having a sword, drew it, and cut off the ear of one of the servants of the high priest. But Jesus rebuked his intemperate zeal, and bid him put up his sword, telling him, "That they who used the sword, should perish by the sword." And after having healed the wounded man's ear by his touch, he demanded of the leaders of the multitude, Why they came in that hostile manner to take him, as if he were a thief or a murderer, when they had daily an opportunity of doing it in the temple? The apostles now seeing their Master apprehended and bound, lost all their former courage, forsook him, and betook themselves to flight, each seeking his own safety. Only one young man remained, whom the soldiers laid hold on, but he, having on only a loose garment, slipped it off, and got away naked.

Jesus, they immediately led away to Annas, who sent him to his son-in-law Caiaphas, who was that year high-priest; and at whose house the Sanhedrim, late as it was, were then sitting. Here he was strictly examined by Caiaphas the high priest; but he returned no other answer, than that all his actions had been done publicly, and therefore he should ask his accusers; at the same time, the council were seeking for false witnesses against him, but could find none of any weight; however, at length, Caiaphas hit upon a method to make him his own accuser, by a question, which if he answered in the negative, they thought, would prove him an impostor; if in the affirmative, a blasphemer. Wherefore adjuring him in the name of God, he asked him, Whether he was the Messiah, the Son of God or not? Jesus in reverence to the name of his heavenly Father declared he was; as they would find

find to their sorrow, when they should see him "sitting at the right hand of the Father, and coming in the clouds of heaven." At this, the high priest and the rest of the assembly rent their cloaths, as in abhorrence of his blasphemy, crying out, "What need we any farther witness against him, when we ourselves have heard his blasphemy?" and they all pronounced him guilty of death, and departed, leaving him to the care and mercy of the soldiers and servants, who, during the remaining part of the night entertained him with bitter scoffs, and made him the subject of their mirth and derision, some spitting on him, others buffeting him, and then blindfolding him, they struck him with their fists, and insulting him as a false prophet, bid him "Prophecy who it was that struck him."

During these transactions, Peter, who had a little rallied his spirits, and hoping to pass undiscovered in the crowd, ventured to the palace of the high priest, to see the issue; and by the influence of his fellow disciple John, who was an acquaintance of the high priest's, got into the palace, and mingling with the servants at the fire, it being then cold, was there challenged as one of our Lord's disciples, which he denied; and withdrawing out of the way into the porch, the cock crew, but he took no notice of it. In the porch he was twice challenged in the same manner; the last time, by one who affirmed that he saw him in the garden with Jesus, and that his speech betrayed him to be a Galilean. This assertion so frightened him, that he not only denied, but with oaths and imprecations affirmed, that he knew him not; and immediately the cock crew; when our Lord, who was then in the hall, looking round on Peter, reminded him of what he had before told him; when stung with remorse, and oppressed with shame and grief, he went out and wept bitterly.

April 3d. GOOD FRIDAY.

Early the next morning, the Sanhedrim met in the council chamber in the temple, and Jesus being brought before them, they put the same question to him again, Whether he was the Son of God? and receiving from him the same answer, they adjudged him guilty of blasphemy, and condemned him to death; then carrying him to Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor, they desired him to ratify their sentence, and to grant a warrant for his execution. Judas, who had waited to see the issue of his treason, now finding his Master condemned, and delivered over to the Roman power, to be put to death; and that things were carried farther than he expected, repented him of his treason, came and brought the money he had received back to the Sanhedrim, and throwing it down before them, openly declared, that he had sinned, in that he had betrayed innocent blood; but they dismissed him with a surly answer, telling him, that was none of their business, and that he must look to what he had done himself; when, tortured with the agonies of a guilty conscience, he went away; and in a fit of remorse hanged himself on the next tree; and what made his death more remarkable, was, that he swelled to such a degree, that falling headlong from the tree, he burst in sunder, and his bowels fell out; so that as his crime was without precedent, so his punishment was without example. The priests however took up the money, but being the price of blood, it was unlawful to put it into the treasury, and therefore they purchased with it a piece of ground, called the potters field, which they made a burial place for strangers.

The principal officers of the Sanhedrim attended Jesus to Pilate, but refused to enter into the judgment-hall lest they should be defiled; Pilate therefore came out to them, to hear their complaint, and asking them, What accusation they brought against the

the prisoner ? They answered in general only, that he was a malefactor, and ought to die ; upon which, the governor told them they might take him and judge him according to their own laws : but they, fearing the people, and being willing to remove the odium of his death from themselves, alledged, that they had not the power of putting any man to death ; then proceeding to particulars. They accused him of perverting the nation, and forbidding the people to pay tribute to the emperor, and styling himself the king of the Jews. This Pilate thought himself obliged to enquire into, and going again into the hall, interrogated Jesus about his being a king ; and finding from his answers, that the Roman state was not like to suffer from a king, whose kingdom was not of this world, he returned again to the people, and told them, he found no fault in him.

Upon this, the rulers more violently accused him, as a seditious and turbulent person, exciting sedition throughout the whole country, from Galilee to Jerusalem. Pilate hearing the name of Galilee, and that Jesus was a Galilean, sent him to Herod, who was then at Jerusalem, and to whose jurisdiction he more properly belonged. This greatly pleased Herod, who had long wanted to see him, of whom he had heard so much, and expected to have seen some miracle done by him ; but our Lord would neither satisfy his curiosity, nor answer his questions, insomuch that he despised him as a poor insignificant stupid fellow, and a fool : and accordingly he committed him to the insult and derision of his guards ; who arrayed him in mock majesty, and in that manner carried him back to Pilate.

Jesus being returned, Pilate again calling the rulers together, told them, that Herod no more than himself could find any fault in him ; he therefore proposed to scourge him and let him go ; this not

being accepted by the Jews, Pilate devised another way to release him; it was customary for the Roman governor, at the passover, to release some one prisoner to the people, whom they should chuse. Now there was then in prison one Barabbas, confined for an insurrection, robbery and murder. Pilate thinking they would chuse Jesus before such an one, proposed to them, which of the two he should release to them, when the people being urged on by their rulers, cried out, "Not this man but Barabbas." Pilate then asked them, What he should do with Jesus? They all cried out, "Let him be crucified." And Pilate asking them the third time, What crimes he had committed? for that he could find none, he would therefore scourge him and release him. At this they grew tumultuous; and those very tongues, which but five days before, had sung the triumphant Hosanna, at his public entrance into the city, now cried, "Crucify him, crucify him." Pilate finding that no arguments could prevail with them, immediately gave orders that Jesus should be scourged.

At this time, the governor received a message from his wife, desiring him to have nothing to do with that just man; for that she herself had that night suffered many things in her dreams, on his account. This made Pilate the more desirous to save him; while the soldiers and executioners having taken him away, and inflicted the scourging on him, in the most cruel manner; they afterwards, in derision, arrayed him in a purple robe, put a crown of thorns upon his head, and a reed in his right hand for a sceptre, and bowed the knee to him in mock homage, saying, "Health to the king of the Jews;" at the same time spitting in his face, slapping his cheeks with their hands, and taking the reed out of his hand, they smote him therewith on the crown, that his head might be the more wounded with the thorns.

In

In this condition, Pilate had him again to the people, imagining, that they could not behold him in this plight, without some pity and compassion; and therefore said unto them, "Behold the Man." As if he had said, See this sad spectacle and relent; but they were still louder in their clamours, and "Crucify him, crucify him," was all the cry; and that their cruel intentions might not be frustrated, they proceeded to tell the governor, that if he released him, he was not Cæsar's friend; seeing he had set himself up for a king, in opposition to the emperor. Pilate, who well knew the jealous temper of his master Tiberius, and how easily a wrong and malicious representation of this matter, by the rulers of the Jews, might prove his ruin, had not courage to withstand this menace, and therefore took Jesus again into the hall, with a design to condemn him, but before he proceeded to pass his sentence, he called for water, and washing his hands before the people, he declared himself innocent of the blood of that just man, and that they must answer for it. To which they replied, "His blood be on us and on our children:" which has ever since, fell very heavy upon the Jewish nation. Then Pilate, being seated on his throne, said unto the Jews, "Behold your King." But they cried out, "Away with him, crucify him." The governor asking them, Whether he should crucify their king? They replied, "We have no other king but Cæsar." Which was the first time that they owned the Roman authority. Pilate having found all endeavours to save him in vain, condemned Jesus to be crucified; and the soldiers taking him away, and having stripped him of his mock majesty, and put on him his own cloaths, they led him out to the place of crucifixion, obliging him, weak and macerated as he was, to bear the transverse part of his cross, on his own wounded shoulders, who now, like Isaac, bore the wood,

wherewith he was to be sacrificed, and to the same place ; our Lord having passed thro' one of the principal streets of the city, and being come near the gates thereof, his strength failed him, so that he was unable to support the weight of the beam ; therefore the soldiers laid hold of one Simon, a Cyrenian, to carry the cross the rest of the way. Thus was this great sacrifice conveyed out of the city, as an accursed thing, and like the scape goat, loaded with the iniquities of the people. Being come to the place of execution, on mount Calvary, and the place where Abraham built the altar, to have offered up his son Isaac, called at that time, Golgotha, here, according to St. Matthew, they offered him a mixture of gall and vinegar to drink, though St. Mark says, wine and myrrh ; but be it which it will, our Lord refused it. Some are of opinion that it was both ; the one as a comfortable draught, by some pious friend who attended him ; the other, by the soldiers, in scorn and derision. Then stripping him of his garments, they nailed him to the cross, and lifting him up, fastened it in the ground ; and to put him to the greater shame, and make him the more obscure, they crucified also with him two other malefactors, one on each side, thereby accomplishing the prophecy of Isaiah, that saith, " He was numbered with the transgressors." On the top of the cross, Pilate ordered this inscription to be set up, JESUS OF NAZARETH, KING OF THE JEWS, which was wrote in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, the three most universal languages at that time. This inscription offended the chief priests of the Jews, but Pilate refused to alter it. It was about noon when our Lord was crucified, when the first thing he uttered, was a prayer for his enemies ; " Father, forgive them ; for they know not what they do." The soldiers who had crucified him, now sitting down near the cross, proceeded to part the spoil of his garments amongst them,

them ; and as there were four of them, they cut his mantle into four pieces, and took each of them one, but his coat being wove whole and without seam, they consented not to spoil it, but to cast lots for it, whose it should be, thereby fulfilling the prophecy of the Psalmist, Psal. xxii. 18. While our Lord thus languished in the most extreme torments, the mob did all they could to aggravate them, by reviling him with taunting speeches ; bidding him, if he was, as he pretended, the Son of God, “ to come down from the cross.” The chief priests and scribes also reviled him, saying, “ He saved others, himself he cannot save.” The soldiers also who stood to guard him, insolently derided him, bidding him, “ Save himself, if he was the king of the Jews :” and even one of the crucified malefactors railed at him in the same manner, scoffingly urging him, to save both himself and them, if he was the Messiah, as he pretended : but his fellow criminal seriously reprov'd him for his folly and blasphemy, confessing that they indeed suffered the just reward due to their crimes, but that Jesus had done nothing to deserve punishment ; then looking upon Jesus, with a noble reliance, he said unto him, “ Lord remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.” To which our Lord returned this most gracious answer, and promise of future and almost immediate happiness : “ This day shalt thou be with me in paradise.”

There were at the same time standing by the cross, Mary the mother of Jesus, his beloved disciple St. John, and some pious women, who bewailed his fate ; Jesus looking down on them, recommended his mother to the care of John, saying unto her, “ Woman, behold thy son ;” and to John, “ Behold thy mother.” And from thence forward John took her home to his own house, and maintained her there.

During

During these transactions, the face of nature began to change; the sun, ashamed to see a suffering deity, withdrew his light into Egyptian darkness, and the stars of heaven appeared; and this supernatural eclipse was the more remarkable, as the moon was not then in conjunction, but at the full; this happened about noon, and the darkness continued for about three hours, and was also universal, inso-much that Dionysius the Athenian, then in Egypt, on beholding it, said to his friend, That either the God of nature then suffered, or sympathized with the sufferer; during this time all things were full of horror; men's hearts failing them for fear; and even the insulting Jews, struck with silence, stood in awful expectation, dreading the event.

All this time the blessed Jesus continued silent, languishing in the most excruciating torture, under the heavy load of the sins of mankind, and the wrath of God for them, having all the powers of hell upon him, and not one pitying angel to assist him; and being in the agonies of death, at about three of the clock, he cried aloud, "Eli! Eli! Lama-sabaethani? My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" And being in an high fever said, "I thirst." When one of the soldiers dipping a sponge in vinegar, put it on a reed, and held it to his mouth, most probably in derision, or to prevent his death and lengthen his torments. But others having mistaken his first words, and imagining he called for Elias to come and help him, cried out, "Let him alone, let us see whether Elias will come to save him." Jesus, having tasted the vinegar, refused to drink of it; and now knowing that all the prophecies concerning him were fulfilled, said, "It is finished." And recommending his soul into the hands of his Almighty Father, he gave up the ghost. This was about three of the clock, the time for offering up of the evening sacrifice. His death was attended by a violent com-

commotion of the earth ; the mountains trembled, the rocks were rent, the graves were opened, and many of the departed saints arose, and went into the city, and appeared unto many. The brazen gates of the temple, which required several hands every night to shut them, flew open of themselves; the veil, which separated the sacred mysteries from vulgar eyes, was rent from the top to the bottom; and the guard of angels which kept the ark of the covenant, was heard calling out, Let us depart hence for the sins of the people; an end was put to the Jewish œconomy; for after that time, the Lot went no more up into the right hand of the priest; nor did the scarlet ribbon on the scape goat, any more turn white, nor the evening lamp any longer burn. And so great was the amazement and dread of them that stood by the cross, that they smote their breasts with fear and sorrow: and the centurion and soldiers who guarded the bodies, seeing so many prodigies, cried out, "Certainly this was the Son of God;" and the officer quitting his military employ, became a Christian, and died a Martyr.

The day following being the sabbath, and also the pascal festival, the rulers of the Jews applied to Pilate, that their bones might be broken on the cross, to hasten their deaths, and that their bodies might be taken away that night, that they might not prophane the feast; this was immediately executed on the legs of the two malefactors, but coming to Jesus, they found he was already dead, and so brake not his legs; but one of the soldiers, either out of wantonness, or to see if he was really dead, pierced his side with his spear, and forthwith there issued out, a quantity of blood and water; which like the blood of the sacrifice, was poured out at the foot of the cross, the altar whereon
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this Lamb of God was sacrificed for the sins of the world.

Among the disciples of our Lord, was one Joseph, a rich man of Arimathea, a ruler of the Jews, who privately believed in Christ, and was not consenting to his death; he, going to Pilate, begged the body of our Lord, that he might bury it; and Pilate being assured by the soldiers that he was dead, granted his request; when, being joined by Nicodemus, another of the rulers, the same who came to Jesus by night, and was also his private disciple. These two took down the body from the cross, wrapped it in fine linen clothes, with spices which they had prepared, according to the Jewish custom, and laid it in a new tomb near the place, which Joseph had hewn out of the rock for himself, in a garden belonging to him; covering it with a huge stone cut out of the rock, and made fit for the mouth of the sepulchre; being in all this assisted by Mary Magdalene, and other pious women, who were present at his death.

Saturday, April 4. This day, which was the Jewish sabbath, our Lord rested in the tomb, and his disciples were under a cloud of the most dismal sorrow, while the Jewish rulers, triumphant in malice, went to Pilate, and told him, that the impostor, whom he had crucified, had in his life time declared, that he should rise again the third day; they therefore desired, that he would order the sepulchre to be well guarded, until after that time, lest in the night his disciples should steal away the body, and persuade the people that he was risen again, possibly, with a design, after the time was elapsed, to expose his body to publick view, to destroy his doctrine. Pilate granted them a guard, and bid them make the place as secure as they could; accordingly they took a guard of seventy soldiers and an officer, to watch the tomb, sealed the stone, and as tradition asserts, bound it about
with

with labels of iron, to make it more secure, and to render all attempts to open it fruitless.

April 5. EASTER Sunday, the Christian Sabbath.

This being the third day from our Lord's crucifixion, he arose again from the dead; and early in the morning of this day, Mary Magdalene, and the other women that were with her at the burial, coming to embalm his body again, having prepared spices and ointments for that pious purpose; in their way, were anxious how they should remove the stone from the mouth of the tomb; probably not knowing, that the malice of the Jews had gone so far as to set a watch, and to secure it; but being arrived, they found neither guard, nor stone to hinder their entrance: for our Lord had gained a compleat victory over death, loosed the chains of hell, broke the prison of the grave, and rose again to life, attended by angels from heaven, and many bodies of departed saints, while the arch-angel, from the throne of God, whose refulgent countenance was like lightening, and his raiment white as snow, well pleased the Almighty's orders to perform, descended in a whirlwind, rolled away the stone, and sat upon it; the sight of whom, so terrified the Roman soldiers, that they all became as dead men: so that the women found no impediment to their entering the tomb; but looking into the sepulchre, found the body gone; and in their concern for it, their fears were increased by a vision of angels, who sat in the tomb, and told them, that the Lord was risen; bidding them go and tell his disciples the same. The women frightened and astonished, left the sepulchre, and went and told the disciples, but they believed them not; however, Peter and John went to see the truth; one of the women, Mary Magdalene, returning with them, to satisfy them and herself more fully in the matter; these coming to the tomb, and going in, found the burial clothes ly-

ing, wrapped up in order; and being amazed thereat, still imagining some one had removed the body, they went away; but Mary staying a little behind, our Lord himself appeared to her; she not knowing him, and supposing him to have been the gardener, and that he could give her some account of the Lord's body, desired him to tell her where it was, that she might remove it; but Jesus calling her by her name, she immediately knew him, and throwing herself at his feet, was going to embrace him; but he forbid her, and ordered her to acquaint his apostles of his resurrection; but so great was their sorrow, and so weak their faith, that they did not believe her.

Some of the guards, in the mean time, in a great fright, returned to the city, and related to the chief priests what had happened, who immediately assembled the council, to consult on this important occasion; who, as their malice was without example, so, being now baffled, put to the utmost stretch of their wits, and reduced to their last shift, they forged the most wretched tale, that ever bungling politicians invented to serve a turn; namely, that while the guards slept, the disciples came and stole the body away, a thing against which they had taken the greatest care imaginable; and that this story might better succeed, they gave money to the soldiers to report the same, promising them, that should this their neglect come to the governor's ear they would mitigate the matter, and secure them from punishment: the soldiers took the money and obeyed the orders, which ridiculous story was currently reported and believed among the Jews for many years.

In the afternoon of the same day, our Lord appeared to two of the seventy disciples, as they went into the country, and talked with them, and made himself known to them; they told this to the Apostles; and Peter, to whom also our Lord had

appeared, told them that they had seen the Lord, but yet some of them doubted. However, in the evening, the disciples being all met together in private, our Lord himself, as they were at supper, appeared unto them; and to convince them of his reality, shewed them his hands and his feet, and eat with them, and then giving them his blessing, he left them.

Thomas happening not to be present at this meeting; when he was told thereof, he declared that he could not believe, unless he himself was to see and handle him. Our Lord, to satisfy his unbelief, that day seven-night, on which he had before appeared to his disciples, appeared again to them, they being met in the same place, and Thomas also with them; who then having received the desired satisfaction, in raptures cried out, "My Lord and my God!"

After this, our Lord appeared to Peter, and others of the apostles, on the shore of the lake of Tiberias, as they were fishing, giving them another proof of the reality of his person by eating with them. Not long after, he appointed a meeting of the whole body of his disciples, on a mountain in Galilee, where he was seen by upwards of 500 at one time: and now it was, that he told his apostles, that all power was given unto him, both in heaven and in earth, and commanded them to preach the gospel to all nations, and baptize them, "In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;" promising to assist them by signs and wonders, the power of healing the sick, and of casting out of devils, &c. and declared, that he would be with them, even unto the end of the world.

The time of our Lord's continuance on earth, was to be forty days, which being near expired, the disciples assembled at Jerusalem, and on the last day, our Lord came to them; and having dis-

coursed with them, concerning the future government of his church, he commanded them not to leave the city, until they should be endued with power from on high, (i. e.) should receive the Holy Ghost, who should teach them all things; which not many days after, descended in a very visible manner upon them.

Our Lord's hour being now come, when he was to be received up into heaven, he led his disciples, and those who were with them, to mount Olivet, where as he gave them his final benediction, he was parted from them, and gradually taken up into heaven, until at last, a cloud received him out of their sight. And as his disciples stood looking after him, wondering and adoring, two angels of his retinue, in bright apparel, descended and stood by them; who assured them, that the same person whom they had now seen thus gloriously ascend into heaven, should so come again, in like manner as they had seen him go into heaven: whereupon they all returned with great joy and comfort to Jerusalem, where they continued, until they had received the Holy Ghost; after which they went out and preached the gospel in all the world, testifying of these things, and witnessing the truth of them by their deaths.

The ascension of our Lord happened on the 14th of May, A. D. 33. and the 36th year of his age, the vulgar æra not beginning untill 3 years after his birth.

To our blessed Lord's memory, the church of England dedicates more particularly 8 several days, viz. 1. His nativity, December 25. 2. His circumcision, January 1. 3. His Epiphany, January 6. 4. His presentation in the temple, February 2. 5. The promise of him to the virgin mother, March 25. 6. His crucifixion, on Good-Friday. 7. His resurrection, on Easter-day. 8. His ascension. The three last being moveable, fall on

on no particular day. To these may be added, Ash-wednesday, the 40 days of lent, and the whole passion week, also Monday and Tuesday in Easter week.

St. S T E P H E N, the Proto-Martyr
and Deacon. A.D. 34.

A. D. 34. **S** O O N after the ascension of Christ and descent of the Holy Ghost, the church, by the preaching of the apostles, was so increased, that they found themselves not capable of managing the whole affairs thereof; but there required more labourers in the vineyard of the Lord; for the believers having raised a fund, or common stock, for the relief of each other, a dispute arose concerning the distribution of the publick treasure, the Hellenistical or Grecian converts complaining, that the Hebrew widows had the preference, while theirs were neglected. To remedy which evil, the apostles recommended to the people, that they should elect out of their body seven men of good report, and present them to the apostles, that they might appoint them to this office of distributing and receiving the publick treasures, that they themselves might be less taken off from preaching the gospel; and also to assist them therein, and to baptize new converts, in the absence of the apostles. In consequence of which, they elected out of our Lord's seventy disciples, Stephen, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicholas; whom the apostles appointed to the office of deacons. Of these Stephen was the most eminent, preaching the gospel with noble courage and undaunted resolution, and converting many. His zeal for the faith, inflamed the envy of his adversaries, and engaged him in disputes with the principal

cipal persons of the synagogues, or colleges at Jerusalem; they being not only places of worship, but of education also, and furnished with learned professors, for the instruction of youth in the laws and traditions of the Jews. Five of these bodies attacked Stephen at once; disputing with him of the perpetual duration of the Mosaic institutions, and the destruction of the temple; but were soon overcome, and unable to withstand the arguments with which the divine spirit inspired him; when finding themselves unable to cope with him in conversation, they suborned some profligate wretches, to accuse him of blasphemy against Moses, against the temple, and against God; and then, in a tumultuous manner, they took him before the council, in order to obtain a formal condemnation against him.

When before the council, the judges and the people observed his countenance to shine with is angelic radiance; and he being admitted to make his own defence, applied himself to answer the charge, in a grave, but severe oration; at the same time supporting his arguments, with an historical account of the most remarkable transactions from Abraham down to Solomon; shewing that the law, for which they were so zealous, could not be of the weighty consequence they imagined, and that salvation might be attained without it; seeing their ancestors worshipped God duely, and religiously, for the space of upwards of 400 years, before either the tabernacle, or the temple were erected; therefore, as they were God's peculiar people, before the law was given, that law could not be the covenant, exclusive of all others, for the saving of men's souls. That Moses, from whom they received the law, foretold the coming of another lawgiver, to whom they should hearken, and yield their obedience; therefore the preaching of Christ who was that prophet, could not be blasphemy against God, but must tend to his glory,

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as leading men to the knowledge of him, whom God had decreed should be the Saviour of the world. That the law, for which they pretended so great veneration, was insufficient to keep them in their duty, as appeared by their frequent rebellions and idolatries, for which the prophets had so often and so sharply reproved them. And that, notwithstanding the presence of God among them, first in the tabernacle, and then in the temple, yet they were not to suppose God so fond as to spare from destruction, those whose sins called aloud for vengeance. Wherefore, as it was no prophannation in the ancient prophets, to denounce the abolition of the law, or the destruction of the temple, so it was none in him, to declare the extirpation of the one, and the utter destruction of the other, to a generation now ripe for dissolution; who had not only imitated, but even exceeded the obstinacy, malice, and barbarity of their forefathers, in that, contrary to the law, they had betrayed and murdered the very person who was sent into the world to fulfil the law.

Which last words, though too true, so incensed the malice of his prosecutors, that they interrupted him in the process of his discourse, with clamour and tumult; when he, fixing his eyes stedfastly upwards on the heavens, was blessed with a vision of the Lord Jesus in his glorified state, standing at the right hand of God, ready to receive this champion of that faith which he had delivered.

This vision so elated him, that he cried out before the council, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God." At the hearing whereof, they all exclaimed aloud against him, stopping their ears, that they might not hear the blasphemy, as they pretended; but rather against any cries of mercy; and looking upon his own words, as they had

done those of our Saviour, as a sufficient evidence against him; they, running upon him, dragged him out of the city, as an impious malefactor; and the witnesses pulling off their clothes, gave them to the care of a young man, named Saul: hereafter an eminent preacher, but now a bitter persecutor of the Christian faith; who thereby in a very particular manner declared himself consenting to his death, and assisting therein; then the witnesses, according to the custom in cases of blasphemy, in token of the truth of their testimony, began to stone him, and were followed by the rest of the people; while the holy martyr continued on his knees, and according to the example of his blessed Master, prayed for his murderers, that God would not lay the guilt of his blood to their charge; and having ended his prayers, he gave up the ghost, or, as the sacred historian expresses it, "He fell asleep;" so easy is death to the good man. Thus was St. Stephen the first martyr in the Christian church, though not the first who died on the account of the gospel.

His body was taken up, and decently interred by some devout men; who, from a sense of the loss of so pious a person, made great lamentations. Of the birth, or what country St. Stephen was of, we have no particular account; but it is probable, that he was an Hellenistical Jew of the dispersion. As to the time of his martyrdom, authors are not agreed thereon, though it was most likely, that he died young, and in the year 34 of the Christian æra; at the time of the passover, and about eleven months after our Lord's ascension; and soon after his being admitted to the office of a deacon.

History informs us, that on the place where he suffered, was a stately church built, in remembrance of him, by Eudocia the empress, wife to Theodosius. The Christian church dedicates to his memory the 26th day of December annually.

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Shortly after the death of St. Stephen, a persecution, wherein Saul was a principal actor, arose in Jerusalem, which obliged the Christians, all, except the apostles, to leave the city, and fly into other places in the country, from the rage of Saul and other zealots; and according to Dorotheus, Nicanor the deacon, and 2000 more believers suffered martyrdom for the Christian faith in and about Jerusalem.]

St. J A M E S the Great, Apostle and
Martyr. A.D. 44.

THIS Apostle is stiled the Great, either on the account of his being the elder of the two named James, or for some particular favours bestowed on him by our Lord. He was by country a Galilean, born either at Capernaum or Bethsaida; was the son of Zebedee, a fisherman of some consequence, who kept a number of servants employed in that business; he was the elder brother to St. John, and a near relation to our Lord himself, being the son of Mary, surnamed Salome, who was cousin-german to the blessed Virgin, the mother of our Lord. His education was that of a fisherman, under his father Zebedee, as appears from his being partners either in work, or in trade, with St. Peter. He had his first institution, together with his brother St. John, under the Baptist. As he was one day with his father, fishing in the sea of Galilee, and being near the shore, our Saviour passing by, called him and his brother John to be his disciples; when they chearfully obeyed, and leaving their father and the servants in the ship, they followed Jesus; and obtained a greater confidence in their Master's favour than any of the other

ther disciples, except Peter, who together with them, were always the companion of the most solemn transactions of our Lord's life, to which none of the rest were admitted; as at his transfiguration in the mount, and his passion in the garden. At electing the two brothers into the apostleship, the Lord stiled them Boanerges, or the sons of Thunder; on account of their bold and resolute spirit and fiery temper; which led them to desire of our Lord, that they might pray for fire to come down from heaven to destroy the Samaritans, because they refused to entertain him. And such was the ambition of James, that it was probably he, who prompted his mother to ask of Christ, that her two sons might sit, the one on his right, the other on his left hand, in his kingdom; for which he received a gentle rebuke from his Master, and a prediction of his own death.

After our Lord's ascension it does not certainly appear how he disposed of himself. St. Jerom tells us, that he preached to the Jews of the dispersion; and the Spanish writers contend, that after the death of Stephen, he preached in Judea and Samaria; after which, he came into the western parts, and particularly Spain; to which some add even Britain and Ireland; but the time of this apostle's life, would not admit of so tedious and difficult a voyage; and the time that must necessarily be taken up in such a journey: therefore, as no authentic historian records any thing of his leaving Judea, or even Jerusalem itself, it is most likely that he continued in the city, with the rest of the apostles; where his zeal was very industrious in converting the Jews, of which there requires no farther proof, than that of his being singled out by Herod Agrippa, for the first sacrifice to the fury of the people.

A. D. 37. Herod having received the dominion of Judea, from the emperor Caligula, and being him-

himself zealous of the Mosaic rites, and desirous to ingratiate himself with the Jews, and to make himself popular raised a persecution against the Christians, who had for some time been quiet, and free from molestation; and that he might not fail in his design, he singled out James, whose boldness in contending for the truth, made him a fit object to begin with. He therefore immediately condemned him to death. His courage and constancy at the time of his trial was so great, that as Clemens Alexandrinus informs us, it converted his accuser; who, as he was led to execution, coming to him, asked his pardon for what he had done, falling down at his feet. The holy martyr, after a little pause, occasioned by the surprise, raised him and kissed him, saying, "Peace be to thee, my son, God forgive thee thy faults." Whereupon he publickly professed himself a Christian; which so incensed the rulers, that they condemned him also to death; and they were both beheaded at the same time and with the same sword. So was St. James the first of the apostles that gained the crown of martyrdom, chearfully taking that cup, which he had before told his Lord, he was ready to drink; and in some sort obtained his precedence in the kingdom of heaven, as being the first Apostle who went thither, having fitted himself for it, by his great temperance and austerity. His death happened a little before the passover, eleven years after our Lord's crucifixion, in the year of Christ 44; He was, in all probability, buried in Jerusalem, where he died; for as to the story of his body being brought to Spain, and of his miracles performed after his death at the chapel of Compostella, they carry with them so much of the legend and romance, that I think it is best to explode them as monkish fables, intended to impose upon the credulous, and drain the purses of the people who should be weak enough to believe them. The church

church dedicates the 25th day of July to the memory of this apostle.

ABOUT the same time with St. James, suffered also Timon and Parmenas, two of the seven deacons. The first at Corinth, where being first thrown into the fire, he miraculously escaped from the flames, after which, he was, by order of the magistrates of that city, crucified. The second suffered at Philippi in Macedonia: but what kind of death we have no where related.

St. PHILIP, Apostle and Martyr.
A.D. 52.

HE was born at Bethsaida, a town in the province of Galilee, near the sea of Tiberias; he was most probably brought up to the fishing business, that being the principal trade of the place, though we have no account thereof, any where in holy writ, nor any other authority, more than suggestion.

A. D. 30. He had the honour to be the first called of all the disciples, for though Andrew and Peter had been before with Christ, yet they left him, and were not called, as disciples, till some time after. Very soon after his call, he introduced his friend Nathanael, to his new master, and we do not find that he ever after left our Lord, till the time of his being apprehended in the Garden. For the tryal of his faith and establishing the same, he was favoured with several particular conferences by Jesus; as the difficulty of procuring bread for the feeding the multitude in the wilderness; our
Lord's

discourse concerning himself, at the last paschal supper, was also addressed to him, and some others; and it was to him, that the gentile proselytes addressed themselves, when they desired to see the Lord. In the distribution made by the apostles of the several provinces for them to preach the gospel in, Upper Asia is by the best ecclesiastical writers, said to fall to his share; where he laboured diligently, in instructing the people in the faith, and converted many to christianity: towards the latter end of his life, he travelled into Phrygia, and arrived at Hierapolis, now called by the turks, Pam-buck Kulasi, a rich and populous city, but greatly addicted to idolatry; more especially, to the worship of a large serpent or dragon.

A. D. 52. The apostle, grieved to see the people so sunk in ignorance, and enslaved by error; by his continual prayers to God, whose religion he was sent to preach, procured the death, or at the least, the vanishing of this famous serpent; and then by the most persuasive arguments, endeavoured to convince the people of their folly, and how unbecoming it was for rational beings, to bestow that worship upon such odious creatures, as was due only to the God of heaven and earth. His arguments had so great an effect upon his hearers, that great numbers embraced christianity: this so enraged the magistrates, that having put him in prison, they first scourged him, and then put him to death; but in what manner authors are divided, some telling us, that he was hanged by the neck to a pillar, others that he was crucified. His body was taken down and buried by his friend St. Bartholomew, who coming that way narrowly escaped the same fate.

In this year, St. Philip received the crown of martyrdom, and was the second of the apostles that suffered for our Lord, dying eight years after St. James the great. He was a married man and left

left three daughters, two whereof died virgins at Hierapolis, and the third being married is said to have died at Ephesus. He left no writings behind him, therefore what were by the Gnosticks ascribed to him, were forged. The church commemorates him, May the 1st, together with St. James the less.

St. MATTHEW, Evangelist,
Apostle and Martyr. A.D. 60.

THIS apostle, was of Jewish extraction, of the tribe of Issachar; he was born, as is most commonly believed, at Nazareth, in the province of Galilee, being the son of Alpheus a Galilean; he is also called by St. Mark and St. Luke Levi, in charity to cover the infamy of his profession before he became the disciple of our Lord, but in his own Gospel he constantly styles himself Matthew, and frequently joins the opprobrious appellation of the Publican thereto: The custom of having more names than one was common, not only among the Jews, but other nations. His business was that of a toll gatherer, or officer to collect the customs on goods, and the tribute of passengers who went by water over the sea of Galilee, and to give them tickets to certify their payment on the other side; therefore for the conveniency of his office, his residence was at Capernaum, where he had an office for the carrying on his business at the water-side. The post he occupied was both by Jews and Gentiles deemed scandalous and odious to them, and the possessors of such places were looked upon and censured as extortioners, cheats and thieves.

A. D. 31. Our Lord, to shew that he came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance, and

and that he did not disdain to take the vilest sinners and those whom the world rejected into his church, having lately cured a paralytic at Capernaum, he retired to take a walk by the sea side, where observing Matthew sitting in his office, he called him to be one of his disciples, and immediately, without staying to settle any of his affairs, he left all and followed him. For which readiness in following Christ, he is by Julian and Porphyry, the great enemies of Christianity, accused of inconsiderateness and rashness, for leaving a profitable, and gainful business to follow he knew not who, or whither he was to go; but as the publicans were always constant attendants on the synagogues, therefore, as St. Jerome observes, the apostle could not be ignorant of our Saviour's doctrines or miracles; on account of which it is highly probable, that St. Matthew had an inclination to become one of our Lords disciples before he was asked, or at the least, that powerful impulse of him to whom all hearts are open, immediately upon his call excited such an inclination; by virtue of which divine impulse, he readily without hesitation obeyed the call. From the time of his election he continued constantly with our Lord, during his abode on the earth; and a few days after his call made an handsome entertainment in his own house for his Master, and the rest of his brother disciples, whither he invited his friends, especially those of his own profession, piously hoping, that they, by our Lord's conversation, might be brought to follow his examples. The presence of our Lord at this feast was an eye-sore to the hypocritical Pharisees, who found fault that so holy a man, as Jesus pretended to be, should keep company with such prophane persons, but Jesus silenced them, by observing, that it was not the healthy, but the sick who stood in need of a physician, and

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that

that he was not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

A. D. 41. After our Lord's ascension, he continued for about eight or nine years in Judea, preaching the gospel: when being about to leave that country, to preach to the Gentiles, at the request of the Jewish converts, and others add, at the command of the apostles also, he wrote the gospel which still bears his name; which, as it was written for the use of the Jewish converts, was written in Hebrew, though soon after translated into Greek, by St. James the less, bishop of Jerusalem, or some other of the apostles: which translation received the sanction of the apostolic college, and was always reckoned canonical; and though the Arians seem to cavil at it, and object to its authenticity, yet the true reason is, only because it makes against their favourite antitrinitarian scheme, and therefore to be by any means exploded, so that it may not be an evidence against them: but its value and authenticity are plain, from St. Bartholomew's carrying it with him in its original language into India, where it was kept by the christians of those parts as a most valuable treasure, and afterwards found there by Pantænus, when he went to preach the gospel there. And the Jewish converts when they retired to Pella, at the time the Romans besieged Jerusalem, took this gospel along with them in the Hebrew; whence it spread over all the countries beyond Jordan, and was always made use of by the Judaizing christians, as containing the true history and doctrine of our Saviour. As the great question amongst the Jews at the time when St. Matthew wrote, was, whether Jesus were the Christ or not; so our apostle shews that he was the true Messiah the Son of God, that his mother Mary was a virgin; that he came not to destroy, but to fulfill the law; that his miracles, were the incontestible proofs of the power

power of God, and his divine mission : and as St. Ambrose observes, it contains several particulars of our Saviour not related by the other evangelists; and gives us more rules for our conduct, in life, more lessons of morality, than any other.

A. D. 45. After St. Matthew had finished his gospel at the general dispersion of the apostles, he left Jerusalem, in order to propagate the faith among the Heathens : and Ethiopia is generally thought to have been the province assigned to him, where he converted multitudes, settled churches and ordained ministers, to confirm and strengthen them ; then he went into Parthia, where he met with the same success, and returning into Ethiopia, to the city of Nadabar, where, having lived a life of greatest austerity and abstinence, his usual diet being only fruits or salads, and having signalized his zeal in propagating the gospel, he there suffered martyrdom being, as some say, slain with an halbert: the time of his death is uncertain, tho' most probably, as is generally believed, about the year 60. His festival is celebrated by the church, on the 21st day of September.

St. M A R K, Evangelist and Martyr.
A. D. 61.

THERE are several of this Name mentioned in the scriptures, as John surnamed Mark; Mark, the sister's son of Barnabas; Mark, whom St. Paul styles his fellow labourer, and one whom St. Peter styles his son ; which last bids fair to be the evangelist, but whether he or any of these were so, or whether he might not be a distinct person from either of them, has been doubted by the learned; though it is highly probable, that, Mark the sister's son of Barnabas, he whom St. Peter styles his son, and

and the evangelist of whom we now treat, were all one and the same person.

Tho' the name of Mark is Roman, yet the evangelist, it is very certain, was born of Jewish parents, originally descended from the tribe of Levi; what his proper name was we are no where informed; but it was customary for the Jews, when they went into the European provinces of the empire, to change their names into some Roman one, the better to conform to the customs of the country; so our apostle, attending St. Peter to Rome, might then take upon himself the name of Mark, and as he never returned to Judea, so he never after resumed his own. Some have thought him to have been of the number of the seventy; but it seems more probable that he was first converted to christianity by some one of the apostles, most probably St. Peter, whom he serv'd as an amanuensis and interpreter. For though the apostles were divinely inspired with the gift of languages, yet the interpretation of tongues seems to have been a gift more peculiar to some than to others, and might probably be St. Mark's talent, either by word or writing, to expound St. Peter's discourses to such as understood not the language wherein they were spoke. St. Mark attended on St. Peter in all his travels throughout Italy, and at Rome.

A. D. 43. Whilst they were at Rome, the converts, being become numerous, and christianity daily increasing, they petitioned St. Mark to commit to writing those most excellent discourses which they had as already heard from St. Peter and himself, by word of mouth, with which the evangelist complied, and wrote his gospel for their use and benefit, which was by St. Peter, after it was finished, perused, approved, and recommended to the use of the churches, for which reason it was, by some of the antients, stiled St. Peter's gospel

gospel, not that he dictated it to Mark, but because it was composed from his discourses, and contained what he usually preached.

It was written originally in Greek ; for though as it was written chiefly for the use of the Christians at Rome, it might be thought to have been in the Latin tongue ; yet, as most of the Romans at that time understood Greek, it being then the fashionable language, and but few of the the Jewish converts understood Latin, a very good reason may be assigned, why St. Mark should chuse to write in Greek.

In this gospel, though more concise than St. Matthew's, yet the apostle relates some things which the other has omitted, and enlarged upon others ; and what is no small argument of its veracity and impartiality is, that he does not in the least spare his beloved Master, St. Peter ; but delivers his shameful fall in denying his Master with more aggravating circumstances than any other evangelist.

A. D. 54. Having finished his gospel, he left Italy, and went into Egypt, being sent, as some say, by St. Peter, to plant the gospel in those parts : he fixed his abode at Alexandria, in which city, and the country round, he preached the gospel with great success, constituted a bishoprick, wherein he was succeeded by Anjanus. From Alexandria he travelled westward, preaching in Marmorica, Pentapolis, and several other places in his road to Lybia, where, notwithstanding the idolatry and barbarity of the people, he, by his discourses and miracles, not only converted, but, before his departure, confirmed them in the belief of the gospel.

A. D. 61. Returning to Alexandria, he preached with equal boldness, as before ; and ordered and settled the affairs of the church, wisely pro-

viding for its continuance, by constituting governors and pastors therein. The success of his preaching, the number of his miracles, and the zeal of some of his converts against the idols of the Egyptians, so exasperated them, that they determined to destroy this introducer of a new religion among them; and it was not long before they accomplished it. For, at the festival of their god Serapis, which happened at the time of Easter, the people being elated with more than ordinary zeal for their idol, they broke in upon St. Mark, then engaged in the solemn celebration of divine worship; and tying his feet together, dragged him through the streets, and the most stony places, to a precipice near the sea, and for that night thrust him into a dark prison, where he was comforted and strengthened, under the ruins of a torn and shattered body, by a divine vision. Early in the morning they began their tragedy again, dragging the apostle about the streets, till his flesh being torn off, his veins emptied of blood, he expired under their hands; but their malice ended not with his life; for making a fire, they threw the poor remains therein, and burnt that body whose soul had long burnt with a fervent zeal for the glory of God, and the salvation of mankind. His bones and ashes were afterwards carefully gathered up by the Christians, and decently interred near the place where he used to preach. From whence, as some say, they were afterwards removed, with great funeral pomp to Venice, where he is religiously honoured and adopted the tutelar saint and patron of that state. St. Mark suffered on the 25th day of April, which day the church annually celebrates to his memory, in the year of Christ 61. He was as to his person, of a middle stature, his nose long, he had large eyes-brows, turning back, his eyes quick and graceful, his head bald, his beard gray.

St. J A M E S the Less, Apostle and
Martyr. A. D. 62.

THIS Apostle, who, for the sanctity of his life, was also called Justus ; is generally believed to have been the son of Joseph the reputed Father of our Lord, by his first wife ; he was surnamed the less, to distinguish him from the other apostle of the same name, the son of Zebedee ; he is also called the brother of our Lord, and the blessed Virgin Mary is by both St. Mathew and St. Mark styled his mother. What occupation he followed before his call to be a disciple, we have no account of, nor is much related of him till after our Lord's resurrection ; when as it is recorded in the gospel of the Nazarenes, our Lord appeared to him in particular, which is also attested by St. Paul ; the reason of which was as follows, On the paschal night after he had drank of the last cup, he solemnly vowed, that he would from thenceforth eat no bread, till he saw the Lord risen from the dead ; wherefore, Christ soon after his resurrection appeared to him, and calling for bread, he blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to James, saying, " eat thy bread, my brother, for the Son of Man is truly risen from the dead."

A. D. 34. Some time after our Lord's ascension, he was by the apostles, on the account of his near relation to Christ, elected bishop of Jerusalem, where he constantly resided, and discharged the duties of his episcopal office, with all care, and diligence, letting slip no opportunity of strengthening the weak, instructing the ignorant, reprov- ing the obstinate, and making converts of that stubborn and perverse people among whom he was resident.

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A. D. 49. In the first council of Jerusalem, wherein it was debated among the apostles how far the gentile converts ought to observe the Mosaic rites and ceremonies, notwithstanding Peter's being present, and bearing a great part in the debate, St. James presided, and gave sentence, that the Jewish ceremonies ought not to be imposed on the believing Gentiles; only in some few cases; viz. That they abstain from all meat offered to idols, lest they might seem to be partakers of the idolatry. That they should not commit fornication, which was among the heathens reckoned little or no crime. That they eat not things strangled, which were extremely odious to the Jews, as dying in the blood, no part of which they were to taste; and lastly to abstain from the eating of blood, which was supposed to have been forbidden to prevent cruelty and bloodshed among men. Which determination being confirmed by the apostles, it was sent to all the christian churches round about, to be made public. Had but the Romanists such a proof of Peter's judiciary authority, she should doubtless have heard more of that, than we have done of, "thou art Peter," or "feed my sheep."

A. D. 62. St James, thinking it to be a part of his apostolic office to take some care of all Christians in general, for that purpose wrote his general or catholic epistle, directed to all the converted among the twelve tribes of Israel, dispersed in all countries; the design of which was to confute and suppress a very dangerous error then growing up in the church; Viz. That a bare faith in Christ alone, was sufficient to procure men's salvation, without any regard to good works. In this epistle he likewise comforts the Christians under those persecutions and miseries, which he foresaw were coming upon them, and exhorts them to adorn their christian profession by meek-

meekness, humility and charity. The whole is wrote with great simplicity, and full of engaging thoughts worthy the apostolic pen.

A. D. 62. In the same, tho' as say others, two years after, the rulers of the Jews being greatly enraged, at St. Paul's having escaped their fury, by his appealing to the emperor; were resolved to be revenged on James and Festus: the Róman governor, being dead, and no other yet arrived, they took that opportunity, and summoned the apostle, and several others, before the high priest and the Sanhedrim, or grand council of the Jews, requiring them to retract their errors; but thinking it unsafe to proceed against Justus by a formal accusation, on account of the great veneration he was had in by the people; they therefore endeavoured by persuasion and subtile insinuations, to engage him to retract his belief in his Lord and Master; and, as it was the time of the passover, that his recantation might be more publick, and better heard, by a greater number of the people, they took him up to one of the battlements of the temples, where having placed him to the greatest advantage, they asked him, saying, "Tell us thou just man, whom we are all of us ready to believe, seeing the people are strangely led away with the doctrine of Jesus that was crucified, tell us, what we ought to think concerning Jesus! To which the apostle, with an audible voice, boldly replied, "Why do you enquire of me of Jesus the son of man? Behold! he sits enthroned in heaven, at the right hand of divine Majesty, as the Son of God, and shall come again in the clouds of the sky." Upon the hearing of which, the people glorified the blessed Jesus, and cried out, "Hosannah to the Son of David." On which, the Scribes and Pharisees perceiving themselves disappointed, and that instead of recanting and reclaiming the people, he had

had confirmed them in the faith of Jesus : they therefore, resolved immediately to dispatch him, that by his fate, others might be warned not to believe on him, and crying out, " Justus himself is seduced ;" they threw him down, in a great rage, from the place where he stood ; when, being by the fall greatly bruised, but not killed, he recovered strength enough to get upon his knees, and to pray to heaven for their pardon, who had thus inhumanly treated him : and while he was thus employed, others of their own sect, who were below, together with the rabble, set upon him with a shower of stones ; and Simeon, a Rechabite, stepped in, and entreated them to spare a just man, who was then praying for them ; when one, more mercifully cruel than the rest, struck him on the head with a club, such as is used by fullers in dressing their cloaths, which blow ended his life, and his miseries together.

Thus died this just man, the eldest son of Joseph, in the 94th year of his age, and about the 62d year of the Christian *Æra*. His death was greatly regretted by all good men, even among the Jews themselves ; and great complaints made thereof, both to their king Agrippa, and to the new governor Albinus ; and for which the high-priest, about three months after, as Josephus tells us, was deposed, who also ascribes the miseries and calamities which shortly after beset Jerusalem and the whole Jewish nation, in a great measure, to the murder of this just man. He was a man of extraordinary piety and devotion, so constant in his prayers in the temple, that his knees were become quite hard and callous as a camels, and so prevailing were his prayers in the sight of God, that in the time of a great drought, he prayed, and the heavens melted into rain, and the clouds poured out water. Nor was his piety greater than his charity, humility,

ty, temperance, and universal goodness, which made him the love and wonder of the age; and gained him so much favour and estimation among the people, that they used to flock after him, and think themselves happy, if they could but touch even the hem of his garment. He was, as some say, a priest of the order of the Rechabites, others of the most antient order, that of the first born; for which cause, he always wore a gold plate or mitre upon his head, as an ensign of dignity. He was buried in a tomb of his own building, on mount Olivet, wherein he had himself buried, Zacharias and old Simeon. His festival is celebrated by the church, together with St. Philip's, on the first day of May.

About the same time with James, many others also of the Christians suffered martyrdom at Jerusalem, of whom we have no particular account.

St. M A T T H I A S, Apostle and Martyr. A. D. 62.

AFTER the ascent of our blessed Lord, the apostles returned to Jerusalem; and within a few days, being met together with the seventy disciples and some other followers of our Lord; very probably, in the house of St. John upon Mount Sion; Peter, who was the oldest apostle, declared to them, the necessity of filling up the vacancy of Judas the traitor, in the apostolic college, and recommended to the seventy disciples, to chuse two out of their number, who had constantly attended the preaching of our Saviour, that one of them might be ordained, to be a witness together with themselves of the truth of the Lord's death, resurrection and ascension. Upon which, two
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candidates were proposed Joseph surnamed Barabas and Matthias, who being presented to the apostles, they begged the direction of God in humble prayers, that he would shew which of the two he had chosen, after which casting lots, it fell to Matthias. As this apostle was not called till after our Lord's ascension, so we have no mention of him in the gospel, and can only say, that he was one of the seventy disciples.

Being raised to the dignity of an apostle, he continued with the rest of the apostles in Jerusalem; and with them received the Holy Ghost, ten days after our Lord's ascension.

A. D. 45. At the dispersion of the apostles, St. Matthias travelled into Cappadocia and Colchis. It is reported of this apostle, that being preaching the gospel in Macedonia, the heathens, to make trial of his faith and integrity, gave him a poisonous draught, which he chearfully drank off in the name of Christ, and received no hurt therefrom; which, if true, is a completion of that prophecy of our Lords, (Mark: xvi. 18) If they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them.

In Cappadocia, our apostle met with very fierce and inhuman people, who treated him with very great rudeness, and after many labours, in converting, numbers to Christianity, he obtained the crown of martyrdom.

A. D. 62. It is generally thought, that returning from Cappadocia to Jerusalem, he was shortly after the death of St. James the less, apprehended in Galilee, and carried before Ananias the high priest at Jerusalem, who exhorted him to deny his faith, but finding he prevailed nothing and that contrary to his exhortations, he still asserted Jesus to be the Messiah, he condemned him to be stoned as a blasphemer, which sentence was immediately put in execution, and Matthias was first

first stoned and then beheaded ; tho' others assert that he was crucified, and that as Judas was hanged upon a tree, so Matthias his successor suffered upon a Cross. He left no writings behind him of any authority, tho' a gospel and some few other pieces have been ascribed to him, but condemned as spurious and forged.

He suffered in the Year of Christ 62. His body as some say was kept a long time at Jerusalem, and from thence removed by Helen, mother of Constantine the great, to Rome. Clemens Alexandrinus has preserved a saying of his, very useful to be observed by Christians, Viz : " That we ought to mortifie and subdue the flesh, and maintain a continued opposition to it, by granting it nothing, whereby its irregular and sensual desires may be gratified, but should, on the contrary, fortify our souls with faith and divine wisdom."

His festival is by the church, celebrated on the 24th day of February.

The first General Persecution. A. D. 64.

A. D. 64. **H**itherto, the rage against the Christians, which had been hitherto confined to Jerusalem, and chiefly against the apostles now broke out, against the christians in general at Rome and all parts of the world : for that, monster in wickedness, Nero, the sixth Roman emperor, having set fire to, and in a great part, burnt the city of Rome, for his diversion, fearing the resentment of the people, and to take off the odium from himself, laid the blame upon the christians ; and by a public edict, raised a general persecution against them ; wherein, Christians of

all orders and degrees, were treated with the utmost cruelty and contempt.

Tacitus, informs us, that at the first, several who professed this new religion, were seized, and by their confessions infinite numbers were detected and executed ; some of whom, were wrapt up in skins of wild beasts, and worried and devoured by dogs ; others were crucified ; others, cloathed in paper or Linnen coats, dipt in pitch, wax, rosin and other combustibles, were burnt alive, to serve, for torches and illuminations in the night. These spectacles the tyrant exhibited in his own gardens, impiously joining the diversions of the cirque, or chariot race, along with them ; in which, he himself appeared publickly in the habit of a charioteer ; which sights, the people entertained, more with pity, than pleasure, as knowing them to be done, more to gratify his own private rage and malice, than for any public benefit. While the christians suffered thus in the imperial city, the persecution raged with no less heat, in the other parts of the empire, insomuch that whole towns were filled with dead bodies, no age or sex escaping ; and even the dead bodies of women, were thrown out naked into the streets, without any reverence, or regard to shame : and tho' the christians underwent many sore trials, and sundry kinds of deaths, yet in the most cruel tortures, did they maintain their faith, with that constancy, as surprised the beholders, and gained many over to the faith ; making by their deaths more converts, than they had done by their teaching, in their lives.

How long this persecution lasted is not certain ; but it is probable, that it abated at Rome in a short time, tho', in some of the provinces, it might continue much longer : of the several, who then suffered martyrdom, we have no certain account, and only

only the names of some of these martyrs, handed down to us, from old martyrologies.

St. A N D R E W, Apostle and
Martyr. A. D. 64.

A. D. 64. **I**N this common calamity, Andrew was called, to follow the steps of his blessed Master. This apostle was a native of Bethsaida, the son of Jonas a fisherman of that place, and brother to Simon Peter. He was one of the disciples of John the baptist, and was present with him, when he gave that testimony to our Lord, as he was passing by ; " Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world ; " upon which, leaving his master he went after Jesus, who courteously entertained him and his companion St. John, who was with him ; upon which account, he is often stiled, " the first called ; " though in a strict sense he was not so. St. Andrew being thus become acquainted with our Lord ; he went to his own brother Simon, and acquainted him that he had found the Messiah, the desire of all nations ; and taking him along with him, he returned again to Christ, and having staid a short time with him, they returned to their own home, and usual business of fishing.

A. D. 31. About a twelvemonth after their return, our Lord passing thro' Galilee, and walking by the sea shore ; he saw two fishing vessels, one belonging to Peter and Andrew, the other to James and John ; who being all companions, after a tedious night's work without any success, were drying their nets on the beach ; and, as he was crouded by the people, who had followed him out of Capernaum, our Lord stepped into An-

drew's vessel, and desired Peter to put a little from the shore, and from thence he preached to the people; sermon being ended, he resolved to confirm his doctrine by a miracle, to give the greater assurance of his mission, and which their former disappointment rendered more conspicuous; therefore ordered Peter to stand farther off shore, and cast his nets for a draught; upon which Peter replied, that tho' they had toiled all the night, without taking any thing, yet, at his command, he would try again: when, letting down their nets, they took such a number of fish, that they were obliged to call to their partners in the other boat, to come and assist them to haul them in; and filled both the vessels therewith. This miracle, so seasonably performed, plainly evinced these fishermen, as well as the rest of the multitude, of the divinity of Jesus; and our Lord, at the same time, bidding them follow him: they left their fishing-tackle and boat to the care of the servants, and Zebedee, the father of James and John, who were also called at the same time: and, from thence forward, became the constant and inseparable disciples and companions of our Lord. Soon after St. Andrew and the rest were raised to the dignity of apostles, and appointed to preach the gospel, and propagate the faith of Christ throughout the world.

A. D. 45. After our Lord's ascension and the descent of the Holy Ghost, that part of the world which fell to St. Andrew's lot, was those vast northern regions of Scythia and Sogdiana, whither, after the departure of the apostles from Jerusalem he repaired, travelling thro' Cappadocia, Galatia, and Bithynia, preaching the gospel wherever he came, along the coast of the Euxine Sea, till he came to Nice, where he staid two years, preaching and working miracles with great success. Thence he went to Nicomedia and Chalce-

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don, and crossing the Propontic sea, came by the Euxine to Heraclea, and from thence to Amastris; at all which places he met with great difficulties in his ministry, which he surmounted by his invincible courage and resolution. From Amastris he went to Sinope, where, as antient writers inform us, he was met by his brother Peter: the inhabitants of this place, being principally Jews, they, partly thro' the zeal to their religion, and partly thro' the barbarity of their manners, treated our apostle with great cruelty and inhumanity, and the most inveterate malice; attempting to burn the house where he dwelt, pulling and dragging his person about the streets, and to such an height did the malice of some carry them, that they even bit his flesh off with their teeth, till thinking they had quite killed him, they threw him out of the city: but he miraculously recovering, boldly returned again into the city; by which, together with the efficacy of his preaching, and the greatness of the miracles which he performed, he reduced them to a better temper, and converted many to the faith.

From Sinope, he returned to Amyntus and Trapezus; thence he went to Neocæsarea, and Samosata, where he baffled several of the wisest and ablest of their philosophers. He then returned to Jerusalem: and after a short stay in that city, revisited the provinces he had before preached in, travelling thro' the country of the Abasgi, where at Sebastople, a city on the eastern coast of the Euxine sea, he preached the gospel with great success. From thence he travelled to the country of the Zecchi, and the Bosphorani; but finding the inhabitants of those places barbarous and intractable, he staid not long among them, only at Chersonesus, where he preached with some success, and made many converts to the faith. Thence crossing the sea, he came a-

gain to Sinope in Paphlagonia, to confirm and strengthen the churches he had before planted in those parts, and ordained Philologus, a former disciple of St. Paul's, bishop of Sinope. The apostle next went to Byzantium, now Constantinople, where he founded a church, and ordained Stachys, whom St. Paul styles his beloved, bishop thereof. Being banished from thence, our apostle fled to Argyropolis, where he staid two years, instructing the inhabitants in the doctrines of Christianity, and converting numbers to the faith of Christ. Thence he traversed over the countries of Thrace, Macedonia, Thessaly, and Epirus, till he at length arrived at the city of Patræ in Achaia, where he still added more converts to the faith.

A. D. 64. Here Ægeas, the proconsul, observing the multitudes, which by this apostle's preaching, had fallen off from Paganism, and had embraced Christianity; and being greatly enraged at St. Andrew's opposing his mandates for the re-establishing idolatry; and also endeavouring to convert him, and undauntedly persisting in his preaching of a crucified Saviour; he condemned him to be first scourged, and then crucified: a death which the apostle extolled. Accordingly after having been cruelly scourged, by no less than seven lictors, or beadles, he was led out to be crucified. As he went to his execution, he appeared chearful and composed; and being arrived within sight of the cross, he said, "That he had long expected and desired that happy hour; that the cross had been consecrated by the body of Christ; that he came therto with great joy, that it might receive him as a disciple and follower of him, who once hung thereon, and to be the means of conveying him safe to his Master, as the instrument upon which he redeemed him."

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The cross was not of the common form, but made of two pieces of timber fixed in the ground, and crossing each other in the form of the letter X. which has since obtained the name of St. Andrew's cross. Being arrived at the place of execution, after the apostle had prayed, and exhorted the people to constancy and perseverance in the faith, he was fastened to the cross; not with nails, but that his death might be more lingering and painful, with cords. In this manner he hung two whole days, all the time teaching and instructing the people in the faith of Christ: when understanding that great intercession was making to the proconsul to spare his life, he prayed earnestly to his Master, that he might then be permitted to seal the truth of his doctrine with his life; and obtained his request, expiring the same day on the cross; which being the 30th day of November, the church has always dedicated that day to his memory. His body was taken down, embalmed, and honourably interred, by Maximilla, a lady of great quality and fortune, whom he had converted, and whom some make to be wife to the proconsul Ægeas. Whose conversion, together with that of his brother Stratocles, by curing them of desperate disorders, Nicephorus says, was a prime reason of the proconsul's displeasure against the apostle. Tho' it is more probable, it was his bigotry to his antient idolatry, and the decrees he had received from Rome, to destroy, and root out christianity. The body of this apostle was afterwards removed to Constantinople, by Constantine the great, and buried in the great church, which he had there founded, in honour of the apostles.

St. P E T E R, Apostle and Martyr. A. D. 68.

A. D. 30. **T**HIS apostle was born at Bethsaida, a small town on the sea of Galilee: he was son of Jonah, a fisherman of that place, which employment our apostle also followed; and being married, had settled at Capernaum, not far from the place of his birth. He was first brought to our Lord by his brother Andrew. When Christ gave him the name of Cephas, which in the Syriac language signifies a stone or rock, the same is Peter in the Greek. He, at this time, abode not long with our Lord, but left him, and followed his former occupation, tho' it is not at all unlikely, that he frequently resorted to him, and that he was present at the marriage feast at Cana.

A. D. 31. About a year following, our Lord called him to be his disciple, at the same time with his brother Andrew (as see his life); our apostle, upon seeing the great and miraculous draught of fishes; amazed at the sight, and dreading the visible appearance of the divine power just by him, threw himself at our Lord's feet, praying him to depart from him, as a vile and sinful creature: when our Lord let him know, that he had a nobler employment for him; and, that from that time, he would make him, and his partners, fishers of men, to catch their souls to eternal salvation; and then bid him and his companions follow him, which they immediately obeyed. On the next sabbath, Peter was honoured with his Lord's company at his house, where, probably at his request, he cured his mother-in-law of a violent and a dangerous fever.

In the choice of the twelve apostles by Christ, and in all other places where any, or all of them
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are mentioned, Peter, if present, is always put the first, on the account of his age; he being the oldest of any of the apostles, which might give him a precedency, though not any superiority over the rest of the apostolic college. Of the triumvirate, the most intimate companions of Christ, who were with him in particular cases, this apostle was one; and was with the Lord at his transfiguration in the mount, and at his passion in the garden, to which none others were admitted, save only himself and James and John, at both of which places, Peter gave proofs of his zeal for his masters service, at the first, in offering to erect three tabernacles, for his Lord, and his two heavenly guests; and at the last, in attempting to defend him from being taken. And we find him upon every occasion, to be the chief speaker or the mouth of the rest of the apostles: but notwithstanding the greatness of his faith and zeal, they both failed him; for when Christ came to his disciples walking on the sea, tho' Peter desired that he might be admitted to come to him: yet being got clear from the ship, and finding the waves beat hard against him, both his courage and his faith failed him, and he in a sinking posture, cried out, "Lord save me, or I perish;" when our Lord set him again on the top of the water, and giving him a mild rebuke for his want of faith, conducted him safe into the vessel.

A. D. 32. Some time after being at Cæsarea Philippi, our Lord in order to make a trial of his apostles faith, demanded of them, the opinion of men concerning him; and being answered, that some took him for Elias, some Jeremias, or one of the antient prophets risen from the dead, he put the question more home to them; and asked, what was their own opinion of him; when Peter, in the name of himself and all the rest, made this bold confession, "Thou art Christ, the son of the living

living God." Upon which the Lord pronounced him blessed, and declared, that this his confession could not proceed from any human, but was the effect of divine revelation. Then proceeding, said unto him, that as his name was Peter which imported a rock or stone, so he would cause him to become a foundation stone in the building of his church, and a prime minister therein, which he should establish, so firmly, that all the power and policy of its enemies, should not be able at any time to destroy it; or according to our Lords own words, the gates of hell should not prevail against it.

This approbation so far elated the apostle, that a little after, when our Lord foretold his passion and sufferings to his disciples, he thinking those things highly disagreeable to the dignity of his master, took upon him to interrupt him, saying, "This be far from thee, Lord, these things must not befall thee." But Jesus knowing this advice crossed his own gracious purposes for man's redemption, gave him, for this imprudent zeal, a very sharp rebuke; saying. "Get thee behind me Satan, for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of Men." Thou thinkest perhaps that in this advice, thou shewest the kindness of a friend that regards my welfare, but art truly an enemy, in that thou endeavourest to draw me aside from doing my Fathers will, and obeying his commands. This reproof, however sharp, did not at all lessen our apostle in his Master's esteem, for we find that he was nevertheless still admitted a partner and a witness to the most private transactions of his life.

A. D. 33. In the last sad scene of our Lord's life, St. Peter became a very great example of human frailty; for hearing our Lord talk of his approaching death, and the fearfulness that should fall on his apostles, presuming too far upon his own courage, assured his Master, that he would

remain with him to the end, tho' all the rest should forsake him : he indeed at that time spake the real sentiments of his heart ; but Jesus, who was better acquainted with the real strength of his resolutions than himself, gave him a most mortifying prediction, " That before the dawn of the next day, or the time of the cock's crowing, he should deny him thrice : " upon which the apostle, with greater vehemence, repeated his former protestation ; adding, " That he would sooner die, than be guilty of so shameful an act. " And in the garden, when our Lord was apprehended, in order to make good his words, and to shew his courage and zeal for his Master, he drew his sword in his defence, and attacked one of the guard, with a design to have cleft him down ; but missing his blow, only cut off his ear. This act of misguided zeal was reproved by his Master ; who ordered him to put up his sword, and healed the person whom he had wounded. And now Christ being in the hands of his enemies, this courageous apostle, as well as the rest, thought it best to provide for his own safety, and left his Master. However, recovering himself, and being desirous to see the end, and to learn his Master's fate, he ventured to the palace of the high priest, and by the interest of St. John, gained admission into the hall ; where he verified our Lord's prediction, and that resolution which had opposed a body of armed men, now trembled at the words of a lilly maid ; and he, thro' fear, denied that Master, in whose cause, not many minutes before, he had hazarded his life ; and tho' the cock then gave him an intimation of his fall, yet he took no notice thereof, but in less than an hour after, with oaths and imprecations, twice repeated his denial ; when the cock again reminded him of his Lord's words, and roused him from his insensibility, which being accompanied with a gracious look from his Mas-

ter, so awakened his sleeping conscience, and brought his baseness, ingratitude, and presumption, so strong into his mind, that not able to contain his grief, he retired out of doors, to give vent to his sorrow, in deep sighs and bitter tears of repentance, and in the anguish of his heart, wept bitterly.

What became of Peter after this shameful lapse, whether he followed our Saviour, thro' the other stages of his passion or not, we have no particular account of; tho' it is certain he staid at Jerusalem, and probably with John, since we find them together on the day of our Lord's resurrection, and on the report brought by the women from the sepulchre, running thither, to elucidate the truth of the matter, and our apostle looking into things more curiously than his companion, by going into the tomb to examine the burial clothes, which John did not, but was content with seeing them lie without the body. And tho' he left the sepulchre with suspense and sorrow, yet about noon, the same day, our Lord favoured him with an appearance of himself, to comfort him under his great grief, and to encourage him with fresh assurances of his favour.

Sometime after, the disciples being according to their Lord's command, removed from Jerusalem into Galilee; and Peter, with some others, returned to their own calling; having been toiling all night, without success: in the morning, they saw on the shore, a grave person, who calling to them, asked them, If they had any thing to eat? who, upon being answered in the negative, he advised them to cast their net on the right side of the ship, which when they had done, they enclosed a great number of fish. St. John, who was one of them, amazed at the strangeness thereof, and remembering the former miracle, at their first calling, cried out, "It is the Lord;" when

when Peter, impatient of any delay to embrace his Master, not staying till the vessel could get to land, girt his coat about him, and swam to shore ; where he found a fire, and fish laid thereon, and bread : when our Lord calling for some of them which they had caught, they were dressed, and he eat with them. After dinner, our Lord addressing himself more particularly to Peter ; asked him three different times, “ Simon, thou son of Jona, lovest thou me more than these ? ” i. e. more than the rest of the apostles, loved him ? which Peter in general answered, That he knew he loved him. Upon which Jesus ordered him to feed his sheep. This question so often repeated, must needs be very affecting to Peter, since his fall ; which had created in him a more meek temper, and an humbler opinion of himself : he does not now prefer himself to his brethren, but modestly declines the comparison, and appeals to our Lord’s omniscience, “ Lord, thou knowest all things ; thou knowest that I love thee.” Thus Providence thought fit, that he who had so shamefully denied his Lord, should as oft make a solemn profession of his love and reverence for him ; each answer being a sort of reparation for his former offence.

After this, in a figurative manner, our Lord thought proper to intimate to Peter, by what death he should glorify God, by commanding him to follow him, that is, to crucifixion, which he afterwards suffered.

After our Lord’s ascension, the apostles being returned to Jerusalem, and having met together, Peter, as the senior, acquainted them of the necessity of filling up the vacancy of Judas in their body ; and supported his argument by a prophecy taken out of the Psalms ; recommending them to chuse one who had been a constant attendant upon the Lord, and who was a competent witness, both of the doctrine and life of Christ, and also of

his miracles, death, and resurrection; and accordingly, they having selected two, out of the seventy, St. Matthias, by the direction of heaven, was chosen to the apostleship.

At the feast of Pentecost, when the miraculous gift of tongues fell upon the apostles, St. Peter, not only vindicated his Brethren, from the scandalous aspersions which many had cast upon that miracle, but effectually proved the efficacy of our salvation, in so clear a manner, and by such convincing arguments, that by this his first discourse, he gained no less than 3000 converts, to the faith of Christ. The next occurrence we find of this apostle is, that soon after, going to the temple at the usual hour of prayer, accompanied by John, when they came to the gate, they found a poor cripple, about 40 years old, who had been lame from his birth; and was laid there, to crave the charity of good and well-disposed persons, as they went in and out of the temple; this miserable object raised the pity of the apostles, and Peter bid him look on them, which the man doing, in expectation of an alms, Peter told him, they had no money to bestow on him, but what they had, they would freely impart to his relief; then, saying unto him, "In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, rise up and walk;" and at the same time laid hold of his hand and raised him up: when his feet and his legs obtained their natural strength, and he went together with the apostles into the temple, leaping for joy, and praising God for his deliverance. This sudden change in this impotent man, filled all who saw it with wonder and amazement, as many of them were well acquainted with the certainty of his infirmity, and had known him from an infant. The man all this time holding Peter and John, the multitude gathered round them. This our apostle, looked upon as a favourable opportunity to preach Christ to the people,

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by whose power and operation that cure had been performed ; which he did, with such success, that no less than 5000 souls were converted to the faith of Christ ; thus did the apostles sow the seed, and God immediately gave the increase. While the apostles were thus preaching to the people, the priests of the Jews, together with the Sadduces, a sect who denied any future state, being jealous of, and envious against the doctrines of Christianity, intimated to the captain of the guard at the temple, that this preaching of the apostles tended to sedition, who thereupon came with a guard and seized them, and put them into prison ; it being too late to examine them that night : the next morning the council being met, the apostles were brought before them, when, as their pretence of sedition was altogether groundless, they examined them only by what power, or in whose name, they had restored the lame man : to which Peter with great boldness replied, By the name of Jesus of Nazareth, whom they had crucified ; backing his answer with such constancy and courage, with reproofs and doctrines so powerful, that he quite confounded the judges, who remembering them to have been disciples of Jesus, and unlearned men, of no education, they were amazed and surprised at their boldness ; the truth of their assertion they could not contradict, as the lame man was present to confront them ; therefore ordering the apostles to withdraw, they debated among themselves what was to be done, to prevent the spreading of the gospel ; and, at last, came to a resolution to awe them into silence ; and calling them before them again, gave them a strict charge, not to preach any more in the name of Jesus, nor to make any farther attempts to persuade the people to believe in him. But the apostles not at all discouraged by their threats, nor fearing them, whose hands were still red with their Lord's blood

blood, and thirsted for theirs, replied, That they could not obey their command, nor feared their threats, seeing they had received a command from God to preach what they had both seen and heard, and appealed to themselves, "Whether they ought not to obey God, rather than men." The magistrates, not regarding this answer, repeated their menaces, and dismissed them without punishment, not that they would have let them go thus mildly, had not the peoples veneration for them, on the account of the miracle, restrained their malice. The apostles being thus dismissed, returned to their brethren, and told them what had happened, who, when they heard it, glorified God.

As the church increased greatly, and being united in an holy love, they threw their fortunes into one common stock, for the support of each other; when, among others, one Ananias, and his wife Saphira, who had taken upon them the profession of Christianity; and having lands sold them, and brought a part of the money into the common treasury; and affirmed it to be the whole of his purchase-money; to which fraud the wife was also privy: but St. Peter, enlightened by the Holy Ghost, reproached the Husband with deceit, with some acrimony, asking him, why he had suffered Satan to take so far possession of his heart, as to cause him to lie, not only unto men, but to God: surprized at the discovery of his fraud, and confounded, he fell down dead at the apostle's feet, and was carried out and buried. Some time after, his wife not knowing of the death of her husband, coming into the assembly, and being also asked the same question, returned the same answer; and she also fell down dead, and was taken up, and buried with her husband. This, together with the miracles they performed, raised a great fear and reverence towards the apostles,

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especially Peter, so that they brought their sick on beds and couches, and laid them in the streets, where he passed thro', hoping that they might receive some benefit, even by his shadow falling upon them.

The great respect shewed to the apostles, the many miracles they performed, and the daily increase of Christianity, so raised the envy of the rulers of the Jews, that they sent and apprehended them, and threw them into prison; but in vain did bars and bolts oppose the operations of God, for that very night, the Almighty sent his angel and delivering them from their confinement, ordered them to proceed in their ministry; and on the next day to preach publicly in the temple; which they readily and chearfully obeyed. In the morning, the council being met, they sent to bring the prisoners before them, but the messengers returning reported, that they indeed found the prison doors safely shut, and the centinels upon guard; but, upon going in, found no one within: this put the whole court in a great perplexity; and as they were debating how these things should be, word was brought them, That the men they had imprisoned the night before, were then preaching in the temple; upon which, resolving to oppose them, they sent the captain of the temple guard to bring them before them, which he did, with all caution and persuasion, fearing to make use of any violence, lest the people should stone them: the apostles being brought before the council, Caiaphas asked them, how they durst continue to preach in the name of Jesus, after the severe prohibition they had so lately received? To this Peter answered, in the same manner as before, that "They ought to obey God rather than men." This so enraged the high-priest, and the rest of the council, that they ordering them to withdraw, were at the first, coming to a resolution to put them to

death, but were diverted from their design, by the mild counsel of Gamaliel, one of their most famous doctors, who represented to them, that if the apostles were impostors, their fraud would soon be detected ; but if their doctrine was really, as they pretended, from God, it was in vain for them to oppose the Almighty ; and therefore it were better to let them alone for some time : the force of this argument so far prevailed, that they changed their minds, and having called the apostles, they ordered them to be scourged, and dismissed them, with a charge not to preach any more in the name of Jesus. The apostles departed, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer for the sake of Christ.

A. D. 34. After the martyrdom of St. Stephen, the disciples, all but the apostles, left Jerusalem, for fear of the persecution which raged there ; when Philip, the deacon, having preached in Samaria, and obtained many converts to the gospel, which being known at Jerusalem, the apostles dispatched Peter and John to confirm them. At their arrival, they prayed for the new converts, laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. Here they met with Simon the magician, who perceiving that a power of working miracles, and speaking with tongues, was imparted by the imposition of the apostles hands, coming to Peter, offered him money to confer that power on him. Peter knowing his insincerity, rejected his proposal with scorn and disdain ; and at the same time gave him a severe reprimand, for his imagining that the divine gifts could be purchased with money ; and exhorted him to repent of his crime. Simon frightened at the apostle's rebuke, and probably fearing lest he should be made an example of, and suffer for his dissimulation, desired the apostle's prayers for him : but how slight his repentance was, we shall see here-

hereafter. The apostles having performed their commission, returned to Jerusalem to the rest of the sacred college.

A. D. 39. The church now enjoying peace, Peter made a general visitation to all the churches of Judea, and arriving at Lydda, he found there a poor man, named Æneas, who had lain bed-ridden with the palsy for eight years; and bidding him in the name of Christ to arise, and make his bed, the man immediately obeyed. The fame of this miracle was soon spread in Lydda, and in the neighbouring villages, and brought many to believe the gospel. The people of Joppa hearing the apostle was so near them, dispatched two messengers to entreat his company at their town; the apostle complied, and, at his arrival, found one Tabitha, or Doca, a rich and charitable woman, who had lately died, much lamented, and tho' they knew not how to ask our apostle to restore her, yet they intimated as much by their lamentations, and recital of her virtuous deeds, and charitable actions, and at the last introduced him into the room where the corps lay; when Peter, moved by their tears desired to be left alone; and having kneeled down, and made his supplications to God, he commanded her to arise, and immediately she opened her eyes, and seeing Peter, she sat up, and he delivered her to her friends: this being done, in the presence of many people, was soon reported all over the town, and many being convinced of the truth, believed in Christ. In this town St. Peter thought proper to continue for some time, lodging with one Simon, a tanner, of that place.

A. D. 40. While St. Peter continued at Joppa, retiring himself one day to prayers, on the housetop, as was customary for the Jews, (who were used to pray, looking towards the temple) about noon, being an hungry, he had called for meat;

to which an word or two had been said, but

but while it was preparing for him, he fell into a trance, wherein as in a dream, was represented to him a large sheet, let down from heaven, which contained several sorts of beasts, birds, and reptiles, both clean and unclean; and at the same time a voice called to him to kill and eat freely of them: but he seeing several animals, forbid by the Mosaic law, and being tenacious thereof, answered, he could not do it, having never eaten any thing common or unclean; to which the voice returned, "What God hath cleansed, that call thou not common." This was done three several times, and the vision disappeared. While Peter continued in doubt, what this extraordinary vision should be, three men, messengers from Cornelius, a devout Roman officer, and a proselyte of the gate, knocked at the door, enquiring, if Peter lodged there? the divine spirit at the same time suggesting to the apostle to go along with them: Peter, being come down, and having received their message, invited them to stay with him that night, and the next morning set out with them for Cæsarea, accompanied with six brethren, as companions of his mission.

At his arrival at Cæsarea, Cornelius in expectation of his coming, had invited his friends and relations to his house, to be partakers in the happy news; and when Peter came, he received him joyfully, and fell at his feet, in a prostrate manner; but the apostle raising him up, told him, such honours were due to God only; and then proceeded to make his apology to the company, telling them, that they could not but know, that it was unlawful for a man who was a Jew, to have converse in matters of religion, with those of another nation; but God had now taught him to make no distinction, and therefore, he readily attended their pleasure, and desired to know the cause of their

their sending for him. Whereupon Cornelius acquainted him, that it was by the special command of God, by an angel, that he might be instructed by him, for which reason, they were now assembled together, to hear what he should say unto them: Peter being now assured, that the partition wall was brokeh down, and, that God had not any regard for one nation more than another; said, That he now plainly perceived, that God was no respecter of Persons, but that the righteous of all nations should be accepted by him; and then, in a few words, delivered to them the great mystery of our redemption, and the doctrines of the faith in Christ Jesus. Whilst Peter was speaking, the Holy Ghost fell on all them who heard him, without imposition of hands; which Peter perceiving, he immediately ordered them all to be baptized, in the name of Jesus; probably, having some deacons in his company, to perform that office. This miracle of the Holy Ghost falling thus on the Gentiles, was highly amazing to the Jewish converts, who were with Peter; and who thought the promise of the Holy Spirit, to belong only to the house of Israel. Peter staid among these new converts for some days, and then returned to Jerusalem. Thus Cornelius was the first fruits of the Gentiles unto God, and Peter the first apostle to the Gentiles. St. Peter being returned to Jerusalem, the brethren found great fault, that he had so familiarly conversed with the Gentiles, but upon his relating to them the whole affair, and how he was sent by God, they turned their accusations into praises, magnifying God, who had thus admitted the Gentiles, to be fellow heirs with those of the circumcision, in the promises of the gospel. From this time, we may reasonably conclude, that the apostle continued at Jerusalem, till he was imprisoned by Herod.

A. D. 44. Herod Agrippa, having caused James the great to be beheaded, which pleasing the Jews, in order to ingratiate himself still farther with that people, he caused Peter also to be apprehended; and having imprisoned him, appointed two quaternions, or sixteen soldiers to keep guard over him, four at a time; designing, as soon the feast of the passover was over, to have executed him. This caused great sorrow among the Christians, who were incessantly offering up their prayers for his deliverance; which so prevailed, that the night before his intended execution, the Almighty sent his angel to deliver him, who found him then in the very confines of death and in chains, sleeping between two soldiers; the angel, surrounded with brightness, gently struck him on the side, and immediately his chains fell off: when the Angel led him through the first and second guards, the prison doors opening of their own accord, and having conducted him safe into the city, left him. The apostle, finding that real, which he had hitherto taken for a vision; and that he was truly at liberty; made the best of his way to the house of Mary, the mother of John, surnamed Mark, but when he arrived he could scarce gain admittance, the maid who came to the door, being frightened at his voice, running back to tell those within, they looked upon it to be all delusion and fancy; however as he kept knocking, they at last opened the door, and being convinced that it was he himself, they returned thanks to God for this his so great deliverance; after which, the apostle withdrew into a place of greater safety. In the morning, it was no small surprize to the guard, and the keepers of the prison, to find their prisoner gone: and Herod ordered strict search to be made, and not finding him, he ordered the soldiers to be put to death, for suffering him to escape.

A. D. 45, At the departure of the apostles from Jerusalem, St. Peter's assignment was the lesser

Asia : he there preached the gospel to the dispersed Jews principally, founded a church at Antioch, which he made his chief place of residence, and for that reason is generally called the first Bishop of that see ; and travelled thro' Cappadocia, Galatia, Pontus, and Bithynia, but whether he went now to Rome, or not as many assert, is very uncertain ; if he did he was undoubtedly twice at that city.

A. D. 49. In the first council of Jerusalem, held this year by the apostles ; St. Peter was present, and spoke largely on the call of the Gentiles, and how unnecessary it was, to impose the Jewish ceremonies on them ; giving an account of his ministry, and how that God had accepted them of the uncircumcision ; which being seconded by Paul and Barnabas, was approved of by the apostles, and James the less, who sat as president made a decree accordingly.

A. D. 50. From Jerusalem St. Peter returned to Antioch, where he made use of that liberty which the gospel had given him, conversing indifferently with both Jewish and Gentile converts ; till some Judaizing Christians coming from Jerusalem, he withdrew himself from the Gentiles, lest he should give them offence ; drawing over Barnabas also, to the same way : for this, St. Paul who was then at Antioch, sharply reprov'd him, before the whole church, declaring, that this prevarication did great injury to the faith : Peter bore this rebuke with patience and humility, and no doubt amended his carriage towards his Gentile brethren. Leaving Antioch, the apostle travelled eastward, preaching the gospel to the Jews in several provinces of the lesser Asia, till he at length arrived at Babylon in Chaldaea, where great numbers of the Jews resided.

A. D. 51. In this city he was joined by Sylvanus or Silas, who left St. Paul at Ephesus, and having

having Mark with him, he wrote his first epistle, which, is directed, to the converted Jews dispersed throughout Asia ; in which, after a solemn thanksgiving to God for their call to Christianity, whereby they had obtained a lively hope of an eternal inheritance in heaven, he recommends to them, the practice of the several virtues, as the means of making their calling and election sure, and lays down, several precepts for their leading holy and religious lives, and living worthy of the vocation, whereunto they were called : the whole written, with a fervour and zeal, not unbecoming so great an apostle. Some have asserted, this epistle to have been written at Rome, and that by Babylon, from whence it is dated, is meant that city. Others that it means Jerusalem, then no longer the holy city, and for that cause stiled Babylon ; but the most probable opinion is, that it was the Babylon we have mentioned above.

Whether St. Peter returned to Jerusalem any more or not is very uncertain, tho' some authors tell us, that upon the martyrdom of James the less, bishop of Jerusalem, all the apostles from the different parts of the world assembled there to chuse a successor, which if true, our apostle must have been among them. How St. Peter disposed of himself, after he left Antioch, is altogether uncertain, but we may be confident that he was not idle, and it is a general opinion, that after having re-visited the churches he had before planted in the East, he carried the glad tidings of the gospel into Africa, Sicily, Italy, and as some assert into Britain itself ; making great numbers of converts in all places wherever he came.

A. D. 64. This year, in the decline of his life, St. Peter settled at Rome, where he laboured in establishing christianity, chiefly among the Jews, which seems to have been his more peculiar designation, and upon which account he is stiled the

the apostle of the circumcision. Here, he found the people greatly set against christianity, by the infernal arts of Simon Magus, who after his defeat by the apostle at Samaria, had gone to Rome, and by strange and wonderful works of magick, sought to advance himself among the people, and had so far insinuated himself into their favour, as to have a statue erected to his honour, with this inscription, SIMONI DEO SANCTO. "To Simon the holy God." Our Apostle, who was greatly displeased at finding this magician still pretending himself to be somebody, and even the Messiah, could not but oppose this impious impostor, and shewed the vanity of his pretences, by doing himself those miracles which the forcerer boasted to perform: for when Simon had pretended to raise a dead body to life, a young man, and a near relation to Nero the emperor, but failing in the attempt, St. Peter by his prayers prevailed, and when by him commanded in the name of the Lord Jesus to arise, the dead got up, eat, and walked, and the apostle delivered him safe to his mother. The magician vexed to the heart at the triumph of the apostle, was worked up to such a pitch of madness and desperation, that he offered to give the people such a demonstration of his power, as would beyond all contradiction prove him to be the Son of God, for that they should see him ascend into heaven, and accordingly, on a set day by the power of magick, or the help of Dæmons, he raised himself up into the air; to the great amazement of the gaping croud, and seemed to be going indeed to heaven; but the apostle being present, prayed to God that he would for the honour of his son, detect the impostor; his dæmons were taken away, his magick destroyed, and himself fell down headlong, so bruised and wounded that he died in a short time after. What truth there may be, in this relation I shall not take upon

me to determine, though it is mentioned by several very eminent writers : thus much however is fact, that Simon did certainly receive a very great defeat from our apostle at Rome. The apostle then continued to preach the gospel with great success, converting many persons of rank and quality, from a vicious course of life, to obey the doctrine of the gospel ; and among others, one of Nero's concubines ; this, together with the defeat of Simon, so exasperated the emperor, who was a great Patron of all magicians and of Simon in particular, and a professed enemy to all goodness, especially christianity ; that he commanded the apostle, together with St. Paul, who was also then at Rome, to be thrown into prison. Tho' it is highly probable, that Nero himself was not at Rome at the time of Simon's defeat, but that hearing thereof in Greece, he sent orders for their imprisonment to his governor Helius. It is reported by St. Ambrose, that the Christians in Rome, seeing the danger in which Peter stood, with prayers and tears solicited him to make an escape from the city, and to reserve himself for a farther benefit to the church, which he at first rejected, as reflecting on his courage and constancy ; but being at last prevailed on by their entreaties, he went off in the night ; but as he passed the city-gate, he was met by a person in the shape of his dear master Christ, who, being asked by Peter, whither he was going, replied, " to Rome to be crucified a second time," which he taking as a reproof, returned back into the city, with great courage, and was immediately put into the Mamertine tower, to St. Paul, who was there before.

A. D. 67. During this time it was, and in this year, that St. Peter wrote his second
general

general epistle, which, like the first, is directed to the converted Jews, and wherein he endeavours, by the most earnest persuasions, to prevail with them, to persevere in the doctrine which they had received; and to testify the soundness and sincerity of their faith, by a life conformable thereto; forewarns them of false teachers, vindicates the doctrine of Christ's coming to judgment, and describes that great and terrible day of the Lord, when the whole frame of nature shall be dissolved, in one general conflagration; and excites them to all diligence and circumspection, that they might then be found without spot and blameless. While St. Peter was thus confined, he, and his fellow-prisoner, St. Paul, still continued to preach the gospel to their keepers, two whereof, Procellus and Martinian, captains of the guards, they are said to have converted, and baptized, with forty-seven others.

A. D. 68. The apostle, after having lain nine months in prison, was brought out to execution; and being first severely scourged, according to the Roman custom, he was led to the top of the Vatican Mount, near the Tiber, to be crucified; he, not being a Roman; but a foreigner. When he arrived there, and the executioners were going to fasten him to the cross, he requested the favour of the officer who attended, that he might be crucified with his head downwards, as thinking himself unworthy to suffer in the same form and posture as his Lord and Master had suffered before him, which request being granted, he expired on the cross. His body was afterwards taken down and embalmed by Marcellinus the presbyter, after the Jewish manner, and then buried in the Vatican, near the triumphal way. Over his grave a small church was built; which being destroyed by the emperor Heliogabalus, St. Peter's body was removed to the

Appian way, two miles from Rome ; where it remained till about the year 250. When Cornelius the 20th, bishop of Rome, reconveyed it to the Vatican, where it rested ; and Constantine the Great, erected a stately church over it, to the honour of the apostle, which has since increased so much in splendour and magnificence, as to become the wonder and admiration of the world.

That St. Peter was a married man is certain, from our Lord's curing his wife's mother of a fever ; and from St. Paul's mentioning Cephas, his leading about a wife with him, we may judge that she accompanied him in his travels ; and, as we are told by Clemens Alexandrinus, she suffered at the same time with her husband, who seeing her going to her death, rejoiced that she was called to such honour ; encouraged her, and calling to her by name, bid her remember the Lord Jesus. At what time this was, we are not told, tho' it is possible, as Eusebius seems to say, that it was either as himself was going to suffer, or was hanging on the cross. He left a daughter, named Petronilla.

As to his person, the apostle was of a middling size, rather slender, and inclining to tallness ; of a pale complexion, with thick and curled hair ; his eyes black ; eye-brows thin ; his nose large, but not sharp. In his natural temper he was warm, eager, and enterprizing, stout and courageous ; tho' in some cases his fear prevailed, and destroyed the succours which reason offered. His humility, and lowliness of mind, was singular ; his zeal and affection for his Master, wonderful ; his regard for the souls of men, ardent ; his diligence in his ministerial office, indefatigable ; and his conduct in his episcopal capacity, prudent and engaging.

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He suffered, together with St. Paul, June 29, in the year 68; which day the church hath ever since observed in memorial of them.

St. P A U L, Apostle and Martyr.
A.D. 68.

THIS apostle, as himself informs us. was a Jew, of the tribe of Benjamin, born at Tarsus, the metropolis of Cilicia; to which city Augustus had granted the privilege of Roman citizens; by which means St. Paul had a national right to his freedom of Rome. In this place, by the care and prudence of his father, he was early trained to the knowledge of religion, and received the first rudiments of that education, of which he afterwards made so good use in propagating the gospel. His father being a Pharisee, took care that he might upon this foundation, proceed to the building up a fair superstructure of divine learning, and the knowledge of the Mosaic rites and ceremonies. Having gone thro' the circle of sciences at Tarsus, he was removed to Jerusalem to finish his studies under Gamaliel, a famous doctor of the law, belonging to the jewish Sanhedrim, and also a Pharisee. Under this master our apostle made a quick and surprizing progress in the knowledge of the law, and recommended himself to the notice and observation of the chief among the Pharisees, who thinking that a young man of his disposition, would be a very fit person, either to propagate, or to defend their opinions, they soon selected him for that purpose, and took great care of his education in the strictest of their principles.

He had two names, the first Saul, his Hebrew name, common in the tribe of Benjamin, in honour to the first King of Israel, who was of that tribe: by this he was generally known to the Jews; his other name was Paul, a Roman name, most likely given him also at the time of his circumcision, referring to the Roman corporation in which he was born, and by which he was generally called by the Gentiles, with whom he chiefly conversed; tho' some are of opinion, that he assumed the name of Paul, upon his having converted Sergius Paulus the governor of Paphos; in imitation of the Greek and Roman generals, who were accustomed to assume names from the places which they conquered, but this opinion agrees but ill with the apostles humility. But if it was an assumed name at all, it is most probable that it was taken at his conversion, it being customary with the Jews, upon any solemn and eminent occasions to assume new names, especially upon entering on a more strict and religious course of life; and this St. Austin seems to justify, and asserts that he took it out of humility, by a very small variation changing his former name, whereby a proud and haughty king of Israel was depicted, into that of Paulus, which signifies little, and that in conformity hereto, he styles himself, "Less than the least of the apostles." Eph. iii. 8.

Notwithstanding his education in the liberal arts and sciences: he was together therewith brought up to a trade, according to the common custom of the ancient Jews, among whom this was a general maxim, they frequently using the adage, "He who teaches not his son a trade, teaches him to be a thief." And their wisest and most learned rabbins were always brought up in this manner, and among their writings we frequently meet with Rabbi Jose, the tanner, Rabbi Jochanan the shoemaker, &c. How far their descendants in this point

point differ from their ancestors, is not my business here to determine, tho' I think I may venture to say, that they in a great measure fulfill the before cited Proverb.

Saul's trade was that of Tent-maker, at which, on some particular occasions, he worked even after being called to the apostleship; a very useful and profitable business in those warlike countries, where there were frequent calls for tents, for the armies.

A. D. 34. Saul having finished his studies, and being very zealous for the Jewish law and traditions, we find him very early in the service of his masters, by consenting to and in all likelihood being concerned in the death of St. Stephen the proto-martyr, and out of his great officiousness to have him executed, he undertook to look after the clothes of the witnesses, who stripped themselves to throw the first stones, as the law directed.

After the death of this holy martyr, the Jews raised a violent persecution against the church in Jerusalem, in which no one was more active than Saul, who became a kind of "Inquisitor Hæreticæ" to the high priest; and such was his zeal against the christians, that it drove him almost to madness and fury, and rendered him cruel in the execution of his commission; going from place to place, to search out the believers, dragging them out of their houses into prison, beating them, and compelling many to blaspheme; and causing many to be put to death: filling the christians every where with terror and dismay. Jerusalem and the parts about it being too circumscribed for the actions of this furious zealot, he addressed the Sanhedrim for a more extensive field to display his zeal in, for the law and traditions of the elders; the council knowing him to be a very proper instrument for the extirpation of the name of Jesus,
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immediately granted his request ; and gave him an unlimited commission to go to Damascus ; and to exercise his authority in such manner as he should think proper, for the apprehending all who believed in Christ, and to bring them prisoners to Jerusalem, to receive sentence.

Thus doubly armed with rage and power he set forward on his journey : breathing nothing but slaughter, and total destruction against the affrighted christians, at that city. But the Almighty who had designed him for nobler purposes, and had separated him from his mother's womb to be a messenger of the gospel to the Gentiles, put a stop to the misguided zeal of this furious and implacable persecutor : for being towards the end of his journey, about noon day, he, and his company, were on a sudden surrounded with an amazing light from heaven, far brighter than the meridian sun, which being seen by them all, so amazed them, that they fell to the ground with the fright. When a voice from this light was heard, saying unto Saul, " Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me ? " To which Saul in confusion replied, " Who art thou, Lord ? " When the voice answered, " I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest ; it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." Purporting, that it was in vain for him to think to counteract the determinations of the Almighty's will. Saul now trembling, and almost dissolved with fear, asked this important question, " Lord, what wilt thou have me to do ? " which shewed a disposition ready to obey the command of the Lord, who ordered him to arise, and to go into the city, where he should be told what he expected from him ; letting him know at the same time, that he had chosen him for a minister and witness of him to the Gentiles, and that he would stand by him and preserve him. Saul was not disobedient to the heavenly vision,
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and arose to follow its directions, when, tho' he found his feet, yet he had lost his eyes, being struck blind with the glory of that light, so that he was under a necessity of being led by his companions into Damascus, where he was lodged at the house of one Judas, and remained without sight, and without meat or drink, humbling his soul to God for his former miscarriages, and for his rage against his church, for the space of three days together. During this time (as Dr. Cave with great probability supposes) it was, that he had that vision and extasy wherein he was caught up into the third heaven, where he saw and heard things great and unutterable, and was fully instructed in the mysteries of the gospel, whence he himself expressly affirms, that he was not "taught the gospel which he preached by man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."

Now there was at this time in Damascus, a certain devout Christian, and one of the seventy disciples, named Ananias; to him our Lord appeared in a vision, commanding him to go into the Straight Street, and enquire at the house of Judas for Saul of Tarsus, who was there praying, and by the imposition of his hands, restore him to his sight, for he was blind. Ananias trembled at the name of Saul, and as an excuse, humbly urged his violent persecution of the church, and the intent he was then come with to Damascus; when our Lord, to remove his fears, acquainted him, that he was now no longer a persecutor, but a chosen vessel, appointed by God to bear his name among the Gentiles, and to testify of him before kings and rulers of the earth; and that he would shew him how great things he must suffer for his sake. Upon this assurance Ananias immediately went in quest of Saul, and entering into the house where he was, accosted him with this friendly greeting, "Brother Saul; the Lord Je-
sus

sus, whom thou sawest in the way, hath sent me unto thee, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost." And while he thus spake, he laid his hands upon him, and there fell from his eyes thick films like scales, and his sight returned; and having heard the rest of Ananias's message, he was baptized into the Christian faith, and at the same time received the Holy Ghost. After this he took some refreshment, and staid a few days with the disciples in Damascus, preaching the gospel in the synagogues of that city, and proving that Jesus was the Messias to the great Joy of the Christians and wonder of all. Thus, by the Almighty power of God, did the wolf soon lie down with the Lamb, and he who had so lately been a most violent persecutor, now became not only a professor, but an eminent and zealous preacher, of that gospel which he but just before had used all his endeavours to destroy. After a short stay at Damascus, St. Paul, for so I shall call him for the future, retired into Arabia, perhaps to decline the odium of the Jews, and the effects of that rage which he well knew would soon follow him; where he first planted the gospel.

A.D. 37. After near two years stay in Arabia, the apostle returned to Damascus, where he preached Christ boldly in the synagogues, insomuch, that the Jews were not a little amazed and confounded, at the great change in his opinions and actions; and so incensed at their having lost so considerable a champion, and gained so powerful an enemy; that they pursued him with the most inveterate malice, and contrived all possible means to dispatch him, and after many stratagems in vain, they as a final resort, applied to the governor, requesting him to apprehend him, and probably, at the same time accused him as a spy upon the city. Hereupon the gates were strictly guarded, and all means used
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to take him : but the disciples having notice thereof, were as careful to preserve him, as his enemies were to destroy him, and finding no other remedy, in the night they put him into a basket, and let him down from the window of one of their houses, over the city walls : by which means he escaped their hands.

A. D. 38. The apostle having thus escaped from his enemies at Damascus, went up to Jerusalem, to visit Peter and the rest of the brethren, and notwithstanding it was now about three years after his conversion, yet upon his arrival he met with but a very cold reception from the disciples ; who being well acquainted with his former behaviour, looked upon him in a suspicious light, were diffident of the reality of his present conduct, and led to suspect that it might be assumed, with an intent the more easily to impose upon them, and ensnare them ; and therefore universally shunned his company : till Barnabas his old acquaintance and fellow student under Gamaliel ; being made well acquainted with the several circumstances of his conversion, and his subsequent behaviour, introduced him to the apostles Peter and James, acquainting them with his miraculous conversion, and zealous preaching at Damascus, and vouching for his sincerity, dissipated their fears, and gained him an intimate communion with the apostles. Here he continued no longer than fifteen days, in which time, his sermons were so powerful, and his disputations, with the Hellenistical or Greek Jews, so unanswerable, that they, like their brethren of Damascus, formed designs and conspiracies against his life : which being understood by the brethren, and he himself also being warned by God in a vision, to leave the city, for that the Jews would not hear him ; they conducted him safe to Cæsarea, from whence he set sail to his native city
Tarsus

Tarsus; not returning to Jerusalem for several years.

St. Paul arriving safe at Tarsus, honoured that city with his chief Residence; going also into several parts of Cilicia and Syria, he there preached the gospel of Christ for near two years, and then returned to Tarsus, where he continued till he was fetched away to assist Barnabas.

A. D. 42. The apostles at Jerusalem, having sent Barnabas to Antioch, to confirm and strengthen the Christians in that city, who finding the encrease of that church required more duty than he alone was able to perform, he therefore took a journey to Tarsus, in search of his friend Paul, whom he perswaded to accompany him to Antioch, and assist him in the preaching of the gospel in that place. In this employment they continued about a year, resorting daily to the place of public concourse, and gained converts so numerous and considerable, that about this time the Nazarenes or disciples of Jesus, in this city. took upon themselves the name of CHRISTIANS; which in a short time prevailed over the whole world. We may here observe, that our apostle declined as much as possible, the going to any place where Christianity had been preached, lest he might be thought to build upon another man's foundation; and for that reason went not of himself to Antioch, tho' he was in the neighbourhood, till he was fetched thither.

A. D. 44. This year, a famine as had been foretold by Agabus a Christian disciple, broke out in Jerusalem; and the Christians at Antioch, having made a collection for the relief of their poor brethren in Judea, Paul and Barnabas were deputed to carry the same, to the apostles at Jerusalem. Having completed their commission at Jerusalem, they returned back to An-

Antioch ; where they had not been long, before God, by some particular inspiration, let them know, that he had appointed them to preach his word in other places also, upon which, the church at Antioch betook themselves to fasting and prayer, for a blessing upon their ministry, and sent them away.

A. D. 45. The apostles having thus received their appointment for the conversion of the Gentiles, left Antioch and came to Seleucia ; from whence they took shipping for the Isle of Cyprus, where, at Salamis the capital of the island, they preached in the synagogues of the Jews, and first began their ministerial office ; hence they went to Paphos, where Sergius Paulus the governor of the Island resided: a man of great wisdom and prudence, but unhappily led away, by the wicked artifices of one Barjesus, a Jewish impostor, who called himself Elymas. The governor being informed of the apostles doctrine, sent for them, but Elymas fearing he might lose so great an admirer, vehemently opposed it, and used all possible means to prevent his embracing the truth ; which when Paul perceived, in the governors presence, he sharply rebuked him, and solemnly denouncing sentence upon him, he was immediately struck with blindness. This miracle, which was the first among the Gentiles, so astonished the governor, that he immediately became a Christian : nor had it less effect, if we may believe Origen and Chrysostom, upon the sorcerer himself ; whose punishment worked such remorse in his mind, that he repented of his former wickedness, became a convert to the gospel, and together with his sight, received the knowledge of Christ, and the vision of the sun of righteousness.

After this success, Paul and his company left Cyprus and came to Perga in Pamphylia : here John Mark being grown weary of this itinerant
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course of life, left them and returned to Jerusalem, and Paul took Titus, a young Grecian convert, for an assistant in his stead.

A. D. 46. The apostle staid not long at Perga, but proceeded to Antioch, the chief city of Pisidia, where on the sabbath after their arrival, they went into the Jewish synagogue to discourse to the people ; here they were courteously invited by the rulers of the synagogue, to comment, as the custom then was, on the lessons taken out of the law and the prophets, which had been just before read to the people : whereupon, Paul rose up and made an excellent discourse to them on the Messiah, which so pleased his audience, that they desired him to repeat it again the next Sabbath day. Several, both Jews and Profelytes, were converted by this first sermon, and attended on Paul and Barnabas for farther instructions. The next Sabbath, the whole City crouded to hear him, which so enraged the unbelieving Jews, that they, not only themselves opposed them with blasphemy, but applied also to some Women of distinction, by whose interest with the magistrates, they were obliged to leave the city : the two apostles seeing their malicious resistance, told those enemies of the gospel, that since they refused to listen to the words of God, they would leave them to their incredulity, and turn themselves to the conversion of the Gentiles, and accordingly having made several converts from among the Gentiles at Antioch, they departed and went to Iconium, a city of Lycaonia ; where they again made the first offer of salvation to the Jews, and by their discourses and miracles, gained many to the faith ; but the Jews, who rejected the terms of salvation, incensed the Gentiles against them, and having obtained the authority of the magistrates, they resolved to have apprehended and stoned the apostles ; but they having warning of their designs, withdrew

drew themselves and fled to Lystra, another city in the same province ; where they continued for some time, preaching the gospel to the people of the city, and the circumjacent country.

Here, St. Paul found a cripple called Æneas, who had been lame from his birth, and perceiving by his attentive behaviour at his preaching, that the man had faith to be saved ; thought it proper, to add the cure of his body, to the cure of his soul : and that the miracle might be the more striking, the apostle in the midst of the assembly, called out to the lame man, “ Stand upright on thy feet,” and immediately his cure was effected, and he both walked and skipped. This amazed the spectators, that acknowledging a divine power in this miracle, they imagined that the gods were descended among them, styling Barnabas on the account of his gravity and age, Jupiter, and Paul Mercury, he being the chief speaker ; and accordingly the priests brought oxen dressed up with garlands, in order to sacrifice to them ; which when the apostles perceived, they ran in among the people ; telling them, “ that they were but men, of the same passions with themselves, that they had not performed this miracle by any power of their own, but by the power of that God, whom they now preached to them ; who had made the heaven and the earth and all things therein, and from whose indulgent providence, they received all that they enjoyed ; and tho’ they had long defrauded him of his honour, yet he now expected their obedience and worship ;” but notwithstanding these arguments, it was with great difficulty, that they dissuaded the people from adoration. But, how inconstant is popular fame ! soon after, those very people, who now esteemed the apostles as Gods, at the instigation of some vagrant Jews, who had come from Antioch, to Iconium, and Lystra, they fell upon
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St. Paul and stoned him, and concluding him to be dead, dragged him out of the city. But when the disciples came to him, probably with a design to inter the body, he rose up, went into the city with them for that night, and the next day departed with Barnabas to Derbe, where having preached the gospel, and converted many to the faith, they returned again to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch in Pisidia, confirming their new converts in the faith, and ordaining priests, or elders, in every city where they came, and having recommended them to the special providence of God, they took their leaves and departed.

A. D. 47. From hence, passing through Pisidia, they came to Pamphilia, thence to Perga, where they staid and preached some time, thence they went to Attalia; and having finished, for the present, returned from thence by sea, to Antioch in Syria; from whence about three years before they had set out, by the special command of God. Being returned, and having assembled the brethren in that city, they gave them a faithful account of their travels, and the success of their labours among the Gentiles, declaring how large a door of faith God had opened to them; and that great multitudes of the heathen were come in, and believed in Christ; after which, they made a considerable stay in that city.

A. D. 48. After the apostles return to Antioch, it seems highly probable that they pursued their labours, preaching in several parts of Judea, Syria, and Cilicia, and carried the light of the gospel as far as to Illyricum; performing several of those journies which St. Paul mentions, 2 Cor. xi.

At this time there arose a dispute between the Jewish and the Gentile converts at Antioch concerning the necessity or indifference of Christians observing the Mosaic rites and ceremonies. This dispute ran so high, that in order to settle it, it
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was thought necessary that Paul and Barnabas should go to Jerusalem to consult the apostolic college thereon; accordingly they set out, taking Titus with them; and in their journey thro' Samaria and Phœnicia related what success they had had among the Gentiles, to the great joy of the brethren.

A. D. 49. The apostles arriving at Jerusalem, they first addressed themselves to James, Peter, and John, by whom they were received with great joy and complacency; and having given them an account of their business, an assembly was convened, wherein the affair was debated, when Paul and Barnabas seconding Peter, as before related, and telling how God had enabled them to convert the Gentiles, and had accepted of them, though uncircumcised, as well as those of the circumcision; this was allowed to be a good argument, and a decree was made by James, that the Gentiles were not under any obligation to the law of Moses.

At this time St. Paul refused to circumcise his companion Titus, because of some false brethren, who sought all opportunities to scandalize the liberty of the gospel. And now also it was agreed on by contract, that Peter should become the apostle of the circumcision, and preach to the Jews, and Paul of the uncircumcision, to the Gentiles. Letters of this decree being finished, they were delivered to Paul and his colleague Barnabas to carry to Antioch, with whom the council thought proper to join Judas and Silas, two eminent men of their own number, that by their testimony of what was done at Jerusalem, the false teachers might be silenced, and the believing Gentiles confirmed in the truth. Being arrived at Antioch, they assembled the church, and presented to them the decretal letters; which when they had read in the whole congregation, they were received with general joy

and satisfaction, finding themselves confirmed in their Christian liberty.

A. D. 50. Not long after this, Peter came also to Antioch, and at the first conversed freely with the Gentile converts, living consonant to the decree of the council; but on the arrival of some Jewish converts from Jerusalem, he fell away, and temporized with them; when St. Paul well knowing what influence the example of so great an apostle might have, in the face of the whole congregation, sharply rebuked him, for this his mistaken complaisance to the Jewish converts, to the great prejudice of the gospel, and endeavouring to impose a yoke upon the Gentiles, which he, though a Jew, thought himself at liberty to cast off.

About the same time, St. Paul who desired not only to plant churches, but to water the same, proposed to Barnabas to revisit the countries they had before converted; when Barnabas being inclined to take Mark with them, Paul opposed it, as having formerly found him deficient in his ministry, when he left them at Perga. But Barnabas, whose love for his nephew caused him to overlook former miscarriages, and to hope for the best, insisted on it; upon which the dispute ran so high, that it occasioned a final separation between them, the best Christians being but men, and subject to the same passions as the rest of their fellow creatures. But altho' they separated, as to their persons, yet they neither of them forsook the ministry; for Barnabas taking his kinsman along with him, sailed to Cyprus. And Paul having chose Silas for his companion, visited the neighbouring churches of Syria, with those of Cilicia, confirming the faith, and carrying with him the decrees of the synod at Jerusalem. Hence it is highly probable, that he sailed to Crete, where he planted the gospel, and having constituted his fellow

low traveller Titus bishop of that island, left him to regulate and set in order such matters as the shortness of his stay would not permit him to do. Thence he returned to Cilicia, and coming to Lystra, he there met with Timothy, a young man whose father was a Greek, but his mother Eunice, a Jewish convert, from whom he had received all the advantages of a pious education, particularly a thorough knowledge of the scriptures; him St Paul designing to make a companion of his future travels; and he being a Greek, lest it might give an offence to the Jews, and hinder the gospel, he caused him to be circumcised; being willing in indifferent matters to accommodate himself to men's humours, that he might save their souls, altho' he had before refused to circumcise Titus, when perverse men thought it necessary.

A. D. 51. Hence he went into Phrygia and Galatia, where he was received with great kindness; and going from thence into Mysia, he was forbid by an impulse of the Holy Spirit to go farther into Asia, as he intended; he therefore went down to Troas, a port upon the Ægean sea; here our apostle had in the night a vision from God, wherein he saw a man in a Macedonian habit, intreating him to come over into that country, to preach the gospel to the inhabitants. This St Paul looked upon as a call from God, and resolved to pass from Asia into Europe; but before he put his design in execution, he seems to have been joined by St. Luke, who from this time became his inseparable companion and attendant.

Paul being now accompanied with Silas, Luke and Timothy, sailed from Troas, and arrived at Samothracia, now called Samandracchi, and the next day landed at Neapolis, a port in Macedonia, from whence they went by land to Philippi, a Roman colony, and one of the most considerable ci-

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ties of Macedonia. Here St. Paul preached in a Proseucha or oratory of the Jews, which stood a little distance from the river's side, not far from the city, which was much frequented by devout women, to whom, and all others as many as came, St. Paul preached the glad tidings of the gospel, converting many to the faith; among whom was a woman named Lydia, a dealer in purple, a native of Thyatira, though settled at Philippi; she being baptized with all her family, in return, courteously invited the apostle and his companions, to accept of a lodging at her house, during their stay in that city.

As they were going to their devotion at the oratory, they were frequently followed by a young woman, actuated by a spirit of divination, who proclaimed their mission, and declared them to be the servants of the most high God and teachers of the way to salvation. But Paul, well knowing that the doctrine of Christ needed not the testimony of Satan to confirm it; turned him about, and in the name of Jesus Christ commanded the demon to come out of her; the evil spirit obeyed, but immediately raised a storm against the apostles; for the masters of this possessed person had made a considerable advantage of her, and drew money from the people for what answers the Devil gave by her mouth; the loss of which so provoked them, that in a great rage they laid hold on Paul and Silas, and dragging them before the magistrates, accused them of creating a disturbance among the people, and of introducing new and unlawful customs in their religion and form of worship, contrary to the laws of the empire; nor were they more ready to give a false evidence, than their magistrates an unjust sentence, who not allowing them to answer for themselves, commanded them to be immediately scourged, as seditious persons; which being performed, they ordered them

them to prison, and that the jaylor should keep them safely, who thereupon thrust them into the dungeon or inner ward, and made their feet fast in the stocks.

In this situation so far were they from dejection, that they spent the night in prayer and praises to God, which they performed with so much ardour and vigour, that they were heard by the rest of the prisoners, while they were thus employed. About midnight, an earthquake shook the prison, burst open the doors, and broke their chains. The jaylor awakened at the shock, concluded his prisoners all escaped, and knowing the strict charge he had received, in a fit of despair was going to put an end to his life with his own sword, to prevent the disgraceful punishment which might fall upon him in consequence of their escape, when our apostle calling to him, assured him his prisoners were all safe. The jaylor amazed at the prodigy, having gotten a light, came trembling in, and threw himself at the apostle's feet, humbly requesting, "What he must do to be saved?" They, without any resentment of the cruel treatment they had received, readily replied, "That if he believed in Jesus Christ he might be saved." After which having given them some brief instructions, he and his whole house were baptized; and as a testimony of his sincerity and sorrow for their former usage, he removed the apostles from their dungeon to his own house, where he washed their stripes, and treated them with all the marks of respect and gratitude in his power.

Early the next morning, the magistrates sent orders for their private dismissal, but St. Paul would not accept of such a discharge, and insisted on his privilege as a Roman citizen, who ought by no means to have been scourged, that punishment being only for aliens and slaves, and therefore as he was an innocent person, and had been condemned.

demned unheard, and had suffered such disgrace and shame, he insisted on as public a recompence, and open vindication of their innocency. The magistrates startled at this, sensible of their error, and the strictness of the Roman laws, went personally to the prison, and with all submission desired them to leave the city. This satisfied the injured saints, who, after some conference with their converts, at Lydia's house, departed.

Paul, and his companions, leaving Phillippi, travelled Westward thro' Amphipolis and Apollonia, and came to Thessalonica, where, according to his custom, Paul preached to the Jews, that Jesus was the Messiah, for three successive sabbaths in their synagogue, when many, both Jews and Grecian proselytes were converted, and the number of Gentile converts was much greater, while the unbelieving Jews, according to their usual perverseness, incensed at the progress of the gospel, raised a mob, and beset the house where the apostles lodged, very probably with a design to have stoned them; but missing of them, they laid hold on Jason, the master of the house, and some other Christians, whom they found with him, and dragged them to the magistrates, alledging, that he had harboured common disturbers in his house, and seditious persons, who endeavoured to set up one Jesus for a king in opposition to Cæsar. As Jason was a considerable man in the city, and his accusers not being able to make good their charge, he was dismissed, upon giving security for his good behaviour, and the Christians not thinking Paul safe, and fearing farther disturbances, they sent him away and his companions, by night, and conducted them safe to Beræa.

A. D. 52. The apostle being arrived at Beræa, he there found the people more docible and ready to be instructed than those of Thessalonica, having

having neither the obstinacy to refuse to hear, nor credulity to believe the doctrine of christianity upon the bare word of the apostle; and therefore having heard him preach, they compared his doctrine with the scriptures, and having found it consonant thereto, great numbers believed on the name of Jesus, that he was the Christ. But when the Jews of Thessalonica heard of the success of the gospel at Beræa, they pursued the apostles thither, and raising disturbances amongst the people, the brethren thought proper to send Paul away privately to Athens, who departed, leaving Timothy and Silas behind, to confirm and strengthen the brethren.

While St. Paul continued at Athens, the most famous and polite city in the world, perceiving the people altogether given to idolatry, it could not but grieve him to see so much religion misplaced: he therefore took all opportunities to instruct them in the knowledge of the true God, whom they ignorantly worshipped, having an altar dedicated to the UNKNOWN GOD: and not only on the sabbath days disputed with the Jews in their synagogues, but preached to the Athenians wherever he found a convenient auditory, and especially upon the change, where both Athenians and foreigners daily resorted both to hear and to tell news, which was the great business of their lives. As what the apostle preached was new and strange to the Athenians, tho' they did not persecute him, as others had done, yet they entertained him with scorn and contempt, especially their philosophers, for the Stoic pride could not stoop to the christian humility, nor the Epicurean lusts endure a sober and a severe life, nor could their interest admit of a resurrection or future judgment, they therefore called him a babler, and a setter forth of strange gods, supposing
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the Anastasis or resurrection to have been the name of some god, and Jesus another. While some of a more serious temper, listened to his discourse, but as the supreme court of the Areopagites were to judge ~~of~~, and to canonize all gods, before they were allowed to be worshipped, they had him before that court, to give an account of his doctrine. Here, in a most excellent discourse, he endeavoured to convince them of their errors and delusions, and informed them, who that unknown but true God was, whom they ignorantly worshipped; whose nature was spiritual, and who invited all men to repentance, in consideration of a judgment to come, by Jesus Christ, of which he had given all men assurance, in that he had raised him from the dead. The bare mention of the resurrection from the dead appeared so absurd and ridiculous to some of them, that they bantered the apostle upon that subject; but others promised to give him a second hearing upon that article another time; and the result of his discourse was, that it converted several of rank and quality, particularly Dionysius, one of the judges (the same who made that remark on the eclipse at the crucifixion of our Lord, mentioned in the life of Christ, and who was afterwards by St. Paul constituted bishop of Athens) together with Damaris, a lady of figure, and said to be the wife of Dionysius.

During the apostle's stay at Athens, Timothy came to him from Macedonia, and brought him an account that the new Christians of Thessalonica were under persecution from their fellow-citizens ever since he left them. This was so great a concern to St. Paul, that he thought to have returned thither in person, but being hindered, he sent Timothy back again to supply his office, and to comfort them in their afflictions: after which, having spent about three months
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at Athens, he left that city and went to Corinth.

Here the apostle met with Aquila and Priscilla his wife ; Jews who had come thither from Rome, in consequence of the edict of Claudius, by which all Jews, were banished from the imperial city ; with whom he lodged, after having converted them to the faith ; and as they were of the same occupation as the apostle himself, tent-makers, he worked with them at his business, that he might not be burthen some to the brethren of that place ; where there was no church, as yet established. On the sabbath-days, he preached in the Jewish synagogues, and by his convincing arguments, brought many, both Jews and Greeks, to the faith ; among whom were Stephanus, Crispus, and Gaius ; whom he ordained to baptize, and to be ministers, to the rest that might believe ; as he himself was not sent to baptize, but to preach. Timothy having performed his business in Thessalonica, arrived here, and brought Silas, with him, and gave an account of the perseverance of the Thessalonian Christians ; which was a great comfort to the apostle, under the afflictions he endured from the unbelieving Jews : and caused him to resolve, again, to visit them in person, but as this could not be done forthwith, he judged it convenient to write to them, and shortly after composed his first epistle to the Thessalonians ; which was the first wrote of all his epistles. In this epistle, the apostle applauds their courage and zeal in the belief of Christ, and exhorts them to perseverance therein, commends their charity to the brethren of Macedonia, instructs them in the duties, of a good life, and exhorts them to the practice of purity and holiness ; particularly in regard to the marriage bed ; to avoid idleness and to be diligent in their callings ; not to grieve immoderately for the dead, as tho' there were no resurrection ; the doctrine whereof he explains, and the manner

of Christs coming to judgment, and the obligation men are under to prepare for it : and cautions them against the coming of the Anti-Christ."

The obstinacy of the Jews, had well nigh discouraged our apostle from preaching any more to them, but being recruited by Timothy and Silas, he took fresh courage, and boldly testified to them again, " that Jesus was the Christ ;" but finding that instead of harkening to his doctrine, they opposed him, with opprobrious language and blasphemy, he rejected them, and from that time preached to the Gentiles during his stay in that place, from whom he reaped a plentiful harvest, and in a short time founded a very considerable church at Corinth. But as the gospel encreased by the labour of the apostle, so did its enemies, who practicing all methods to destroy Paul, he was strengthened by a vision from heaven, and encouraged to proceed in his ministry with all boldness ; and assured of the divine protection, that no one should harm him ; for that there was much people in that city, to come unto Christ ; upon which, he continued a year and an half, preaching in that city, and the parts adjacent ; and established several rules for order and decency in the church.

During his stay, the Jews, stung with envy at his success among the Gentiles, raised a general insurrection against him, and in a tumultuous manner had him before Gallio, the proconsul of Achaia, and accused him of introducing a new religion, contrary to the Jewish law, and the Roman government. But Gallio, not thinking the matter cognizable before the civil power, rejected their indictment ; and refused to hear them ; when they continuing clamorous, he ordered his officers to turn them out of the court : where upon the common people set upon Sosthenes the ruler of the synagogue, and one of the apostle's chief accusers and beat him in the face of the court, of which the pro-

proconsul took no notice, for Gallio cared for none of these things."

After this tumult was over, and before the apostle departed from this city, he wrote his second epistle to the Thessalonians, to supply the want of his going to them according to his promise. Wherein he endeavours to confirm their faith," animates them to endure persecutions from the unbelieving Jews, who were lost to all goodness and Godliness, whom the divine vengeance was ready to overtake: assures them of his Prayers for them, rectifies the mistakes which some false teachers had made, in some passages of his former epistle, relating to the day of judgment, and shews them what events should precede the approach thereof, and concludes with divers precepts for a holy and religious life, and to avoid any forgery in his name, which he seemed to have some reason to suspect, assures them of its being signed by his own hand."

A. D. 54. Having finished his epistle, he resolved to return into Asia, having been in Europe about two years, eighteen-months of which was spent in Corinth; accordingly taking with him, Aquila, and Priscilla his wife, he went down to Cenchræa; the harbour for the city of Corinth, in the Archipelago; where the apostle shaved his head for the performance of a Nazarite vow, he had formerly made, the time thereof being now expired. Whence they sailed to Ephesus in Asia, where St. Paul preached a short time to the Jews, arguing with them of the Messiah; but being determined to be at Jerusalem at the passover, he staid not long here, tho' much desired, leaving therefore his companions, Aquila and Priscilla at Ephesus, promising to return to them again, he took shipping and sailed to Cæsarea, and from thence went to Jerusalem. After having here visited the brethren and kept the feast, he went to Antioch, and from thence visited the provinces of Galatia, and Phrygia, in all places confirming

confirming the disciples and enjoining them to make contribution for the poor. Hence the apostle returned to Ephesus, where being arrived he met with certain believers, who, upon enquiring he found to have been only baptized with John's baptism, and had not so much as heard of the Holy Ghost; whom, being sufficiently instructed in the doctrine of Christianity, and baptized into Christ, the apostle laid his hands upon them and they received the Holy Ghost, in the gift of tongues, prophesying, and other miraculous powers. For three months after this St. Paul preached in the synagogues to the Jews, endeavouring with much earnestness to convince them of the truth of the gospel of Christ, but finding that instead of success, he met with nothing but abuse, and infidelity, he left their assemblies, and preached to the brethren, and to all who resorted to him, in the school of one Tyrannus, a Christian convert; by which means all the inhabitants of that part of Asia, had an opportunity of hearing the gospel and seeing it confirmed, by divers miracles wrought by the hand of Paul; insomuch that handkerchiefs or other clothes being touched by the apostle, and applied to the sick and demoniacs, they were presently cured and dispossessed. Yet these things had but little influence on the Jews, till an accident awakened their thoughts; some travelling exorcists of the Jews, who went from town to town, to cure diseases and to cast out devils, by their charms, coming to Ephesus, and seeing with what ease the apostle effected his miraculous cures and dispossessions; they took upon themselves to do the like, and thought to add greater force to their charms, by invoking the name of Jesus; when our Lord, who would not suffer his name to be thus abused, made the devil himself the instrument to punish the profanation of it. Among these exorcists were seven brethren, sons of Scæva a Jewish priest, who
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having undertook to cure a demoniac, commanded the evil spirit in the name of Jesus, whom Paul preached, to come out of the possessed: when the devil answered, "Jesus, I know, and Paul I know, but who are ye?" the demoniac at the same time growing outrageous, set upon them, tore off their cloaths, and handled them so roughly that they narrowly escaped with their lives. This being known in Ephesus, filled both the Jews, and the Gentiles, with a reverence for the name of Jesus, and was the means of bringing many to the faith of Christ. Many also who had addicted themselves to the study of magic and astrology, for which Ephesus was famous, brought their books together, and to give a testimony of the sincerity of their faith in Christ, publicly burnt them, to the value of 1500 Pounds. Thus did the gospel prevail in Ephesus, by the means of our apostle, but not without much opposition and persecution: for the Jews, and some others, daily laid wait for St. Paul, and sought to have him cast to the wild beasts, or otherways to have killed him.

A, D. 57, Paul having continued full two years at Ephesus, now thought of returning into Macedonia and Achaia, to pass the winter at Corinth, and from thence to go to Jerusalem, to the feast of the Pentecost, after which he purposed going to Rome, as he had long intended. But being obliged to defer this journey for some time, he sent Timothy, and Erastus, (who before his conversion had been chamberlain of the city of Corinth, but had ever since followed St. Paul,) into Macedonia, and appointed the former to visit the church of Corinth, and prepare them for his coming. They had not long been gone, but St. Paul received a letter from the church at Corinth, desiring to be resolved in several points, relating to charity and marriage, and some other subjects. This was brought to him by Apollós and others, who gave him an account of the distracted

and bad state of that church, then unhappily broken into parties and factions, on the account of their teachers: each preferring the person by whom they had been converted, and despising others. That many disorders were committed in their love feasts, and the holy sacrament corruptly, and irreverently celebrated; that the Christians injured and defrauded each other in their dealings, and then went to law before Heathen tribunals: that a Christian of that city had committed incest, in marrying his mother in-law; and that there were some who denied the resurrection. To rectify these disorders, and to cure their spiritual distempers, St. Paul, wrote his first epistle to the Corinthians, "wherein he shews the equality of the preachers of the gospel, and the insufficiency of their ministry, without the divine assistance: orders the incestuous person to be excommunicated! blames their litigious law suits, and advises them to put their differences to arbitration among their brethren; propounds to them the first institution of the sacrament, and exhorts them to fit themselves for it, by an examination of their lives; he answers the questions concerning marriage, celibacy, and meats offered to Idols; and adds several things, relative to a decent behaviour, both in men and women, of the gifts of the Holy Ghost, of the excellency of charity; of the gift of tongues; of prayer in an unknown tongue; and lastly established the truth of the gospel, and the certainty of the resurrection." This epistle was written in the name of himself and Sosthenes, and sent to Corinth by Stephanus, Fortunatus, and Achaïus. The effect of which was, that it greatly reformed the Corinthians, and brought them to a serious remorse and vigilance in doing their duty, and none more so than the incestuous person, whose sorrow was so great as almost to overcome him.

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Shortly after this, our apostle, who had preached twice in Galatia, in the years 51 and 54, and found the Galatians very ready and docible auditors, making a very considerable progress in the faith, and giving proofs of their constancy, by suffering for the gospel ; but were now led away by some mistaken Jewish Christians, who had been converted by St. Peter, and who asserted, That circumcision, and an observance of the Mosaic ceremonies was still to be observed ; and the more easily to gain credit, they had vilified St. Paul, insisting that he was but a second rate apostle, and not to be compared with Peter, James or John, who had conversed with Christ in the flesh, and received the precepts of the gospel from his own mouth ; whereas Paul was no apostle, but had been taught by them, or some others ; which delusion was too eagerly followed by the Galatians, who suffered themselves to be imposed upon by these artful seducers. This being told to the apostle, he thought it necessary to write to them thereof, and in his epistle, “ he sharply reproves them for suffering themselves to be so easily imposed on, vindicates the honour of his apostleship, and proves himself as great as the greatest of the apostles ; refutes the Judaical opinions they were infected with, and by several arguments proves, that the slavery of the law brought a curse with it, and was destructive of their christian liberty, and incapable of procuring justification in the sight of God ; and concludes with giving them several rules and directions for the conduct of their lives and conversation.” This epistle he wrote all with his own hand, contrary to his usual manner.

Before St. Paul left Ephesus, he was in no small danger, by reason of one Demetrius, a silversmith, who made small models of the famous temple, and image of Diana, at Ephesus, which
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he sold, not only to the citizens, but to travellers in all parts, who came thither to see the city, and the temple, by which he acquired considerable gains. This man perceiving that if Christianity prevailed, he, and his brethren, must lose their business; wherefore he being a leading man in his profession, called together the rest of the same trade with himself, and represented to them, the danger in which their trade was of being ruined, by the preaching of St. Paul, who had drawn away numbers, not only in Ephesus, but all over Asia, from the worship of their goddesses, and had vilified her honour, whom all the world adored; so that not only their trade, but the goddesses herself and temple were in danger of being destroyed. This speech so enflamed the rest, that they immediately cried out, "great is Diana of the Ephesians!" and presently set the whole city in a flame. In this confusion, having found Gaius and Aristarchus, two of Paul's companions, they dragged them to the theatre, probably with a design to cast them to the wild beasts, which were kept there, for the public shews; St. Paul hearing of their danger, not regarding his own life, was for going into the theatre among them, had not the Christians, then present, and even some of the prefects, or managers of the theatrical games, well knowing the danger to which it must have exposed him, earnestly dissuaded him from it; and to this circumstance it is that he alludes, when he tells us, that he fought with beasts at Ephesus; not that he really did so, but that in the intention of men, they designing, if they had caught him, to have obliged him to have done it. During this confusion and tumult, one Alexander, a Jew, endeavoured to speak to the people, and to make an apology, designing, in all likelihood, to excuse his countrymen, and to lay the whole blame upon St. Paul, and the Christians

Christians ; but as soon as the populace perceived that he was a Jew, they suspected him to be one of St. Paul's associates, and raised a loud outcry, so that for the space of two hours, nothing could be heard, but "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." When the noise was a little abated, the town-clerk, or recorder, a discreet and prudent man, addressed himself to the people, telling them, "that it was sufficiently known to all the world the great veneration which the city of Ephesus had for Diana, but that they had brought thither men who were neither guilty of sacrilege nor blasphemy against their goddess : that if Demetrius, or his associates, had any thing to accuse them of, they ought to prefer their indictment, and let it be tried in a special manner, they being in danger of being called to an account and punished for what they had done already in that day's uproar." With which prudent discourse he appeased and sent home the people.

Shortly after the uproar was appeased, St. Paul having staid now near three years at Ephesus, and founded a considerable church, called the Christians together, and having constituted Timothy, bishop and governor of that church, took his leave of the brethren, and departed by Troas to Macedonia, and went round about that country as far as to Illyricum. During his continuance in Macedonia, he was joined by Titus from Corinth, who brought him an account of the good effects of his first epistle to the Corinthians, and how great a reformation it had made among them, particularly in the incestuous person, who most earnestly desired the apostle's absolution, and assured him that the Corinthian's alms for the poor brethren were ready ; but as several still persisted in their contumacy, and misinterpreted both his words and actions, vilified the apostle's authority

he sold, not only to the citizens, but to travellers in all parts, who came thither to see the city, and the temple, by which he acquired considerable gains. This man perceiving that if Christianity prevailed, he, and his brethren, must lose their business; wherefore he being a leading man in his profession, called together the rest of the same trade with himself, and represented to them, the danger in which their trade was of being ruined, by the preaching of St. Paul, who had drawn away numbers, not only in Ephesus, but all over Asia, from the worship of their goddess, and had vilified her honour, whom all the world adored; so that not only their trade, but the goddess herself and temple were in danger of being destroyed. This speech so enflamed the rest, that they immediately cried out, "great is Diana of the Ephesians!" and presently set the whole city in a flame. In this confusion, having found Gaius and Aristarchus, two of Paul's companions, they dragged them to the theatre, probably with a design to cast them to the wild beasts, which were kept there, for the public shews; St. Paul hearing of their danger, not regarding his own life, was for going into the theatre among them, had not the Christians, then present, and even some of the prefects, or managers of the theatrical games, well knowing the danger to which it must have exposed him, earnestly dissuaded him from it; and to this circumstance it is that he alludes, when he tells us, that he fought with beasts at Ephesus; not that he really did so, but that in the intention of men, they designing, if they had caught him, to have obliged him to have done it. During this confusion and tumult, one Alexander, a Jew, endeavoured to speak to the people, and to make an apology, designing, in all likelihood, to excuse his countrymen, and to lay the whole blame upon St. Paul, and the Christians

Christians ; but as soon as the populace perceived that he was a Jew, they suspected him to be one of St. Paul's associates, and raised a loud outcry, so that for the space of two hours, nothing could be heard, but "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." When the noise was a little abated, the town-clerk, or recorder, a discreet and prudent man, addressed himself to the people, telling them, "that it was sufficiently known to all the world the great veneration which the city of Ephesus had for Diana, but that they had brought thither men who were neither guilty of sacrilege nor blasphemy against their goddess : that if Demetrius, or his associates, had any thing to accuse them of, they ought to prefer their indictment, and let it be tried in a special manner, they being in danger of being called to an account and punished for what they had done already in that day's uproar." With which prudent discourse he appeased and sent home the people.

Shortly after the uproar was appeased, St. Paul having staid now near three years at Ephesus, and founded a considerable church, called the Christians together, and having constituted Timothy, bishop and governor of that church, took his leave of the brethren, and departed by Troas to Macedonia, and went round about that country as far as to Illyricum. During his continuance in Macedonia, he was joined by Titus from Corinth, who brought him an account of the good effects of his first epistle to the Corinthians, and how great a reformation it had made among them, particularly in the incestuous person, who most earnestly desired the apostle's absolution, and assured him that the Corinthian's alms for the poor brethren were ready ; but as several still persisted in their contumacy, and misinterpreted both his words and actions, vilified the apostle's authority

thority, and accused him of levity, in not coming to them, with severity in his judgments, with contempt of the law, in not observing the Mo-
saic rites, and that tho' his writing was imperious, yet his person was mean and despicable. All which, being acquainted with by Titus, he thought it convenient to write a second Epistle to Corinth, which he sent by Titus, and some other brethren. It was written from Philippi in Macedonia, in the name of Paul and Timothy, directed to the church of God in Corinth, and to all the saints in Achaia; "in it the apostle excuses himself for not coming directly to Corinth, and endeavours to set right what his former epistle had not effected, commends their zeal against the incestuous person, and allows them to be reconciled to him, vindicates his apostleship from that contempt and scorn, and himself from those slanders and aspersions which the false teachers, who found themselves lashed by his first epistle, had thrown upon him; and that he might the better secure them against their wicked insinuations, he was as it were obliged, though contrary to his own inclination, to glory in his revelations, extraordinary labours, and sufferings for the gospel; in the delivery of which he uses much eloquence, which was natural to his pen: and lastly, he exhorts them by the example of the Macedonians, to a liberal contribution to the poor brethren, and to have their alms in readiness against his arrival."

Having gone thro' Macedonia, St. Paul came into Achaia, where he stayed three months, residing principally at Corinth; from which place he wrote his epistle to the Romans; for though he had never been at Rome, yet being an apostle of the Gentiles, he looked upon that city as a part of his charge, tho' the church had been planted by another; but he having heard of some disa-
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greements in that church, which was composed both of Jewish and Gentile converts, he thought it his duty to set them right, and therefore wrote to them, in which letter, "He states and determines the great controversy between the Jews and the Gentiles, concerning the obligation of the Mosaic law, and the material doctrines of Christianity which depend thereon; such as that of Christian liberty, the use of indifferent things, and the like. Discovers the effects of original Sin, and the power it has, even in the regenerate; next explains the profound Questions concerning election, and reprobation, in his discourse of the call of the Gentiles and the rejection of the Jews: and intermixes several admirable instructions and exhortations to the duties of an holy and religious life." This epistle was written by Tertius his Amanuensis, and sent to Rome by Phæbe, a deaconess of the church of Cenchræa.

A. D. 58. St. Paul, having collected the alms, both of the church in Macedonia and Achaia, purposed to carry them to Jerusalem, and to go thro' Syria, as the shortest way; but being informed of a conspiracy against his life, laid by the Jews, which was to have been executed on his road, he therefore changed his course, and returned to Macedonia, being accompanied with several of the brethren to Philippi; whom he sent forward to Troas, with orders to wait there for him; while he himself staid at Philippi till after Easter, and celebrated the feast with the Philippians. After which he went on board, and in five days landed at Troas, where having staid a week, on the Lord's day the church being met together to celebrate the Holy Communion, St. Paul preached to them, and as he was to leave them the next day, he continued his discourse till midnight; which caused a drowsiness in some of his hearers, and one Eutychus, a young man, who was sitting by the win-

window, which was open, fell fast a sleep, and dropt out of the window into the street, and was taken up for dead ; the room where the apostles were assembled being three stories high. This accident, greatly alarmed the company, but St. Paul going down, he embraced him, and bid them not be concerned, for he was not dead, and he was carried up again alive, to the great Joy of the assembly. The apostle going up again, re-assumed his discourse ; in which, together with the celebration of the sacrament and other divine offices, he continued till break of day, and then took his leave and departed.

From Troas, the apostle went on foot to Assos, where he met with Luke and the rest of his companions waiting for him ; and from thence they went by sea to Mitylene, and passing by Chios, they arrived at Samos, and landed at Trogyllium ; whence the next day they went to Miletus, where Paul making a short stay, sent a messenger to Ephesus, desiring the clergy of that city and the neighbouring churches to come to him at Miletus : they readily complied with his invitation, and being arrived, and met together, the apostle made them a very excellent discourse, wherein he proposed his own example for their imitation, and exhorted them to all zeal and vigilance in the duties of their ministry ; especially, as that after his departure, they would be in danger from heretical teachers, who would break in among them, and deceive many. He told them, that he was now going to Jerusalem, where he should undergo troubles and afflictions, and that he was well assured that they would see him again no more. After having ended this his farewell discourse to them, he kneeled down, and concluded with a prayer ; which done, they all melted into tears, and with the greatest expressions of sorrow, attended him
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to the sea side, and saw him and his companions safe on board.

From Miletus they sailed to Chios, thence to Rhodes, thence to Patara, whither their ship, probably was bound; here finding another vessel going to Phœnicia, they went on board, and sailing by Cyprus, in five days landed at Tyre. Here they staid a week with some Christian brethren, who would fain have persuaded Paul from going to Jerusalem, but he would by no means listen to their proposal: wherefore accompanying him to the ship, he prayed with them on the shore, and embracing them, took his leave and departed. From thence he sailed to Ptolemais, where having saluted the brethren, he went by land the next day to Cæsarea in Palestine, and lodged at the house of Philip the evangelist, one of the seven deacons.

During his stay here, one Agabus, a Christian prophet, lately come from Jerusalem, being present, took Paul's girdle, and binding his own hands and feet therewith, declared by the spirit, that the Jews at Jerusalem should in the same manner bind the man who owned that girdle, and deliver him over to the Roman power. Whereupon the brethren all earnestly entreated the apostle to put off his journey, but to no purpose, for he professed that he was ready for the worst that could happen, not only to suffer imprisonment, but even death itself at Jerusalem for the sake of Christ; so that finding his resolution fixed, they importuned him no more, but left the event to the will of God: whereupon Paul, and his company, set forward, and arriving at Jerusalem, before the feast of pentecost, were received by the Christians in that city with great joy, lodging at the house of one Mnason, an old disciple of Cyprus.

Being come to Jerusalem, the next day they went to James, the bishop of that city, at whose house the principal of the Christians were assembled. After mutual salutations on each side, St. Paul gave them an account of the progress of the gospel among the Gentiles, for which they returned thanks to God for the success of his labours. After which they informed him, that as there were great numbers of Jewish converts in the city, who were only tenacious of the Jewish ceremonies, as well as the unconverted Jews, and who had been informed, that he taught the converts to renounce circumcision, and the law of Moses, that upon which account the populace, as soon as they should hear of his arrival, as hear of it they must, would gather together to see his behaviour in this matter; therefore to stop their mouths, and to prevent any clamour, they advised him to join with some Nazarites, who were among them, to accomplish a vow, and to provide the proper sacrifices with them, by which it would appear that he himself observed the Mosaic ceremonies, and that the reports to the contrary were groundless. The apostle, who in indifferent things was willing to become all things to all men, followed this advice, and did as they desired. The ceremony for the purification of the Nazarites continued for seven days, which being almost ended, some Jews who had before seen Paul in Asia, finding him in the temple, laid hold on him, and called for assistance, urging that he was the person who had throughout all Asia, preached both against the law and the temple, and had even now profaned that sacred place, by bringing some uncircumcised Greeks into it: peremptorily concluding, that because they had seen Trophimus, an Ephesian convert with him in the city, he had also brought him

him into the temple. The whole city soon took the alarm, and the populace running into the temple, seized on the apostle, and dragged him out thereof, shut the gates, and were going to stone him, had not Claudius Lyfias, the commander of the garrison in the castle of Autonia near the temple, came with a guard, and taken him from them, ordering him to be taken into the castle, till he should be better informed of his crime, concluding him more than a common malefactor, and therefore farther ordered him to be doubly ironed, as he could gain no information from the multitude, who called for nothing but his death, and followed with such a croud, that the soldiers were obliged to take him in their arms, to secure him from their rage and violence. As they were going into the castle, and were upon the stairs, the apostle asked the governor, if he might speak to him; who hearing him speak Greek, supposed him to have been a famous Egyptian impostor, who, not long before, had raised a sedition in the city, and been defeated with 4000 followers, by Felix the proconsul; but upon St. Paul's telling him, that he was not, but a Jew of the city of Tarsus in Cilicia, and therefore begged leave to speak to the people, which being granted, standing on the stairs of the castle, he made signs to the people for silence, which obtained, he addressed himself to them in the Hebrew tongue, which, when they heard, they became a little calm; when, in a set oration, he gave them an account of his birth and education, his extraordinary zeal in persecuting the Christians in his youth, for the truth of which he appealed to the high priest, and the sanhedrim; of the miraculous manner of his conversion, and his mission; all which they heard with tolerable patience, till mentioning his being, by a particular vision, sent to preach to the Gentiles, they

grew outrageous, and cried out, to have him put to death; for that it was not proper such a fellow should live; and the more to express their fury, threw off their clothes, and cast dust into the air, intimating thereby their readiness to stone him.

Lyfias, desirous to know what could be the reason of such fury, ordered him into the castle, and that he should be examined by scourging, to cause him to confess what he had done, which caused the Jews to be so bitter against him. But as the beadles were binding him to execute their orders, Paul, who was always ready to take the benefit of the law, asked the officer, who attended, Whether the laws of the empire allowed a Roman citizen to be used in that manner, and to be punished unheard and uncondemned. This the officer immediately reported to the governor, advising him to be cautious in his proceedings against the prisoner, for that he was a Roman. Upon which the governor came himself to him, and asked him, If he was a freeman of Rome? and being answered in the affirmative, told him, It was a great privilege, and what had cost him a great sum of money to obtain; to which the apostle replied, That he was born free. Whereupon, being surprized, and not a little afraid, because he had bound and chained a Roman Denison, he laid aside all thoughts of scourging him; but nevertheless ordered him to be detained in the castle.

Lyfias still desirous to know the certainty and nature of the apostles's crime, the next day brought him before the sanhedrim, the great council of the Jews, before whom, when the apostle began to declare his innocence, and to make his apology: Ananias, the high priest, ordered the officers who stood by, to strike him on the face, looking on this as a reflection on the justice of the tri-

tribunal. Upon which Paul, with some reluctance replied, " God shall strike thee, thou whited wall (or hypocrite) for that thou, who art a judge of the law, hast ordered me to be buffeted, contrary to the law." Then some present, asking the apostle How he dared to revile God's high priest? He answered, that he knew him not. The council then proceeded in their examination, when the apostle, who always retained the innocency of the dove, now found it necessary to make use of the wisdom of the serpent for his preservation, and perceiving the council to be composed of men of different opinions, being part Pharisees, part Sadducees, he declared his original, " That he was a Pharisee himself, educated in all the doctrines of that sect; and that for the hope of the resurrection, one of their principal tenets, he was called in question." This proved a bone of contention to them; for the Pharisees were great patrons of the resurrection, the doctrine of transmigration and a future state; all which the Sadducees as strenuously denied. The doctors of the law therefore, who were Pharisees, took up to vindicate him, declaring, that he had done nothing amiss. This the Sadducees, with as great warmth, opposed; and the contention ran so high, that Lyfias, fearing lest Paul should have been torn in pieces by the tumult, was obliged to send a party of soldiers to take him away, and convey him safe into the castle; where, in the night, our Lord appeared to him in a vision, encouraging him to constancy and resolution, telling him, that as he had bore testimony of him at Jerusalem, he must do the same at Rome.

But now behold the malice and fury of the Jews, what they could not gain by process, in a judicial manner, they attempt to affect by treachery, and above forty of them entered into

a conspiracy, neither to eat nor drink, till they had killed Paul: and in order to execute their design, they acquainted the sanhedrim therewith, desiring them to solicit his being brought before them again, on the morrow, for farther examination, and they would way-lay him, and dispatch him in the way. But this conspiracy being providentially discovered, by Paul's nephew, he acquainted his uncle therewith, who sent him to the governor, to whom he laid open the design of the Jews. Lyfias therefore to prevent all farther mischief, sent him away privately that night, under a strong guard to Antipaga, and the next day to Cæsarea, to Felix the governor of the province, to whom he wrote word of what had happened, and the reason of his having sent the prisoner, and that he had ordered his accusers also to appear before him at Cæsarea, to give their evidence. Fælix having read the letters, and finding that Paul belonged to the province of Cilicia, promised to give him a fair hearing, as soon as his accusers should arrive, and ordered him in the mean time to be secured in Herod's Palace.

About five days after, Ananias the high priest, and some others of the Sanhedrim came to Cæsarea, and brought with them one Tertullus, a famous advocate, to accuse Paul. When the court was set, and the prisoner brought to the bar, Tertullus, lawyer like, began his harangue, with a flattering compliment to the governor, in order to prejudice him to favour his client's cause; and then accused the apostle, of being a raiser of sedition, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes, and an impious prophaner of the temple. Adding, that they would not have given the governor this trouble, but would have convicted him by their own laws, had not Lyfias prevented them,
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by sending him and them both thither ; that he, upon examination might find the truth of their charge. The governor then giving Paul liberty to make his own defence ; the apostle after a short compliment to Felix, proceeded to answer the charge, and he wholly denied the first article, challenging them to prove that they found him in the temple, either disputing or stirring up the people, or in the synagogues, or any other place. To the second, that he was an heretic and a ring-leader of the Nazarenes, he answered that it was true, that after the way which they called heresy, so he worshiped the God of his fathers ; as all the holy patriarchs had done ; in the hope and expectation of the resurrection of the dead, endeavouring to live with an unblameable conscience, both towards God and man." As to his prophaning the temple ; he shews, the little grounds there was for that accusation, as he came to Jerusalem (where he had not been twelve days) to bring charitable contributions to his poor brethren ; that he was, it was true, in the temple, though not as some Asiatic Jews, who raised the disturbance, suggested, either with multitude or tumult, but performing his religious exercises, and purifying himself according to the Mosaic law, and that if they could affirm any thing contrary, they ought to have appeared in court to make it good ; and lastly, appealed to those of the Sanhedrim, who were then present, whether he had not been acquitted in their own council at Jerusalem ; where nothing of moment had been laid to his charge, save only by the Sadducean party, who would have condemned him, for his belief in the resurrection of the dead. Felix having thus heard both parties, refused to give any final determination, till such time as Lysias himself should come down, from whom he expected to be fully informed of the controversy ; ordering in the mean time, that
Paul

Paul should be kept in the custody of an officer, that none of his friends should be hindred from visiting him, and that he should be used with due civility.

Sometime after, Felix with his wife or rather concubine Priscilla, an apostate Jewess, sent for Paul, as if he desired some information concerning the Christian religion, and desired him to speak largely thereon, when the apostle spoke freely of the obligation, which the laws of Christ laid men under, to lead holy and religious lives; and strongly insisted on the duties of justice, temperance and chastity, virtues in which the governor was highly defective, and urged the severe and strict account which men must give at the last great and terrible day of judgment; his discourse so stung the conscience of this wicked ruler, that he could not forbear trembling; and broke off the apostle's discourse abruptly, telling him he would hear him again, at a more convenient opportunity. Under which pretence he often sent for him, not that he desired to profit by his discourse, but in hopes to obtain a fee of him for his liberty: but as neither the apostle, nor any of his brethren offered to redeem him, he kept him in prison two years, to gratify the Jews, who before he had greatly incensed, by acts of oppression, and then, at the expiration of his office, for the same reason, left him in prison.

A. D. 60, When Portius Festus, succeeded to the government, he left Paul still in prison, and at his going to Jerusalem, was greatly urged by the heads of the Sanhedrim against him, who strongly petitioned to have him brought to Jerusalem, to be tried there; designing to assassinate him on the road; but the new governor answered them, that as the person in question was now at Cæsarea, and he himself should shortly go thither, it would be more commodious to defer the trial till his return, when they should have a fair hearing before him there.

Festus

Festus, who on his return to Cæsarea, was accompanied by some of the heads of the Sanhedrim, the day following, ordered Paul to be brought before him, when the Jews exhibited fresh articles, but were not able to prove any thing against him. However, Festus willing to oblige the Jews at his first entering on his government, asked Paul whether he was willing to go up to Jerusalem, and to be there tried before him? Upon which, the apostle pleading his right of a citizen of Rome, with a true Roman spirit, replied, that he was then before Cæsar's judgment seat, where he ought to be tried; that he had done nothing against the Jews; that if he had deserved punishment, he did not decline it, but ought not to be delivered over to the malice of his enemies; and as he was a Roman, he appealed to the emperor himself. Whereupon Festus having conferred with the council, answered, "that as he had appealed to Cæsar, he would send him to him."

Shortly after, king Agrippa, and his sister Bernia, coming to visit the new governor, Festus, during their stay, gave them an account of his prisoner St. Paul; how he had been earnestly treated with by the Jews to condemn him, but that he himself could find nothing against him, only some matters relating to their own superstition; and that as he had appealed unto Cæsar, he purposed, by the first opportunity, to send him to Rome. This account raised the curiosity of Agrippa, to see and hear the prisoner; and accordingly, the next day, he, and his sister, accompanied by a great train of nobility, coming to court, Festus ordered the apostle to be brought before them, who being present, the governor acquainted the king and the whole court, how much he had been solicited by the Jews, both at Jerusalem and Cæsarea, against Paul, whom they
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alleged ought to be put to death, as a notorious malefactor ; but as the prisoner had appealed to the Emperor, he was resolved to send him to Rome ; but was nevertheless willing to hear his cause again discussed, before so judicious a person as Agrippa, that he might be furnished with some instructions to send along with him, as it would be very absurd to send a prisoner to Rome, and to have no crime to lay to his charge. Hereupon Agrippa told Paul, that he was at liberty to speak for himself. The apostle began his defence with declaring, That he thought it a great happiness, that he was allowed to defend himself before one so well versed in the Jewish customs, as Agrippa, and so well acquainted with their doctrines ; when, after giving a full account of his education, and manner of life, his conversion, and the divine mission which he obeyed, and his preaching to the Jews first, and then to the Gentiles ; that for this, and for his hope in the resurrection of the dead, the Jews had apprehended him, and would have put him to death, if he had not appealed to Cæsar ; but that being upheld by a divine power, he still continued in that testimony, asserting nothing but what was agreeable to Moses and the prophets, who had plainly foretold, that the Messiah should be put to death and should rise again, and by his doctrine enlighten both the Jewish and the Gentile world. The governor knowing nothing of these matters himself, and perceiving his warmth and zeal for the great truths of christianity, here interrupted him, telling him, that he was beside himself, and that too much learning had made him mad. To which the apostle calmly replied, that he was not mad, and spoke nothing, but the words of truth and of soberness. Then appealing to king Agrippa, for the truth of our Lord's death
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and resurrection, who could not be unacquainted therewith, all things being done in an open and publick manner : And then, telling the king, that he was confident that he believed the prophets, and therefore could not be ignorant, that the prophetesies were accomplished in Christ. This perswasive and elegant discourse of the apostle's, so affected Agrippa, that he declared that he had almost perswaded him to be a Christian. To which the apostle replied, “ that he heartily wished, that not only he, but that the whole company, were Christians.”

This was the conclusion of the audience, when the court broke up, and Agrippa and Festus, conferring together, they freely owned that the apostle had done nothing worthy of death or imprisonment, but that he might have been set at liberty, if he had not prolonged his confinement, by appealing to the Emperor.

It being now resolved that Paul should go to Rome, he and some other prisoners of note, were committed to the care of Julius, an officer belonging to the legion which was called Augusta : and being accompanied by St. Luke, Aristarchus, a Macedonian, Trophimus and other disciples, about the latter end of September, they went on board a vessel at Adramyttium, and coasting along Asia, northward, arrived at Sidon, where Julius, who treated the apostle with great civility, gave him leave to go on shore, and visit his friends and refresh himself. Thence they intended to cross over to Lycia, but were by contrary winds forced to sail by Cyprus, and coasting along the provinces of Cilicia and Pamphylia, landed at Myra, a Lycian Port, whither this ship was bound. Here, finding an Alexandrian vessel bound to Italy, they went on board, and sailing westward, passed by Cnidus a promontory of Caria ; thence steering south-

southward, with some difficulty they stood over for Salmone in Crete, and sailing along that island, came to a place called the Fair Havens, near the city of Lasia or Thalassia; and it being dangerous sailing in those seas, at that season of the year, St. Paul advised the Centurion, to winter there; telling them, that if they proceeded in their voyage, not only the ship and cargo would be in danger, but their lives also. The officer however, giving more ear to the master of the vessel, who, as the harbour was incommodious, and a gentle gale springing up at South, encouraged them to proceed for Phœnia, another harbour on the same Island, where it was safe riding for the vessel, and there to winter. Therefore weighing anchor, they coasted along the island, and it was not long, before they found how unsteady the wind was, which veering round, blew a violent north east hurricane, which bore down all before it, and the ship refusing her helm, they were forced to leave her to the mercy of the wind and waves, and let her drive. When they were carried to a small island, on the south west of Crete, called Claudia. Here with much difficulty they got out of the boat; and, with no less labour, undergirt the ship, to secure it from splitting. And the storm continuing, the next day they were obliged to throw their cargo overboard, to lighten the ship, lest she should fall upon the shallows, and two days after, cut away the mast, shrouds, and tackling, and threw them overboard. And being now for several days, deprived of the sight of either sun, moon, or stars, and in the midst of a dismal scene of horror and amazement, they all gave themselves over for lost. When Paul blaming them for not having taken his advice at the Fair Havens, desired them, however to take courage, for that God had assured him that night, by an angel

angel, that he should be carried safe before the emperor, and had promised for his sake, that he would spare all the rest in the ship, nevertheless they should be all cast ashore, upon a certain island.

Having been now driven for fourteen days, up and down the Mediterranean; the sailors judging that they were near some land, they sounded and found but twenty fathoms water, and throwing the lead, a second time, found but fifteen fathoms; when fearing, lest in the dark they might strike on some shelves they thought it best to come to an Anchor, till the morning might give them farther information where they were; when the sailors, who best understood the danger, under colour of mooring the ship safer, were lowering the skiff, designing to trust themselves to that, and in hopes to get on shore; which St. Paul perceiving, he told the officer, and the soldiers, that unless they stayed in the ship to assist, the rest could not be safe; for tho' God, had promised him to spare their lives, yet it must be by their own diligence, in managing the ship. The soldiers therefore, for their own safety, cut the Ropes of the skiff, and let her fall into the sea, and drive away. And now, as the light was approaching, Paul with the utmost care and tenderness, persuaded his companions in distress to take some refreshment, the better to enable them to grapple with the difficulties they had yet to encounter; they having for the last fourteen days, during the storm, eaten in a manner nothing, and assured them again, that not an hair of their head should perish; and taking some provision himself, he blessed it, and eat of it, and the rest followed his example; when having satisfied themselves, to lighten the ship the more, they threw what provisions were left overboard. In the morning they discovered land, but knew not what place it was: however discerning a

small Creek, which seemed to make a kind of Haven, they resolved, if possible, to put in thither, or at least to bring their vessel as near land as they could. Whereupon the sailors weighed Anchor, loosed their Rudder, and getting up a Sail, steered for the shore. But unexpectedly falling between two seas, they run the ship aground, so that the head remained fast, but the stern was soon broke by the sea. When the soldiers saw this, they proposed putting the prisoners to death, to prevent their escape; but the Centurion, who was sensible of Paul's worth, and being desirous to save him would by no means allow of it, and gave orders, that every one should shift for himself, those who could swim, first, that they might assist the rest; the result of which was, that some by swimming, others on planks, and broken peices of the ship, to the number of 246 persons got all safe on shore. Being thus escaped, they found that the Island they were wrecked on, was called Melita, now Malta, the inhabitants whereof received them with much kindness and civility, and made them a fire to dry themselves, when Paul, laying on some wood, a viper forced out by the heat, fastened on his hand, whereupon the Maltese who were Pagans, by the light of nature concluded, that he must be some notorious malefactor, or murtherer, whom tho' he had escaped the danger of the sea, yet divine vengeance still pursued him on shore; but the apostle by shaking off the venomous creature into the fire, soon undeceived them, for they perceiving that contrary to their imaginations, he remained unhurt, they changed their sentiments, and cried out that he was a God. Not far from the place where they were cast away, was the residence of Publius, the governor of the Island; who being informed of their misfortunes, in compassion of their distress, entertained them with great hospitality, for three days. In acknowledgment of which, the apostle,

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by his prayers and imposition of hands, cured his father of a fever and bloody flux, under which he had some time laboured ; and performed the same charitable act, to several others in the Island, who were afflicted with various disorders ; by which means he required great honour and respect, and converted many to the faith of Christ ; among whom was Publius himself. After having staid three months at Malta, settled a church there, and, as some say, made Publius bishop of it. The Centurion, with the apostle and the rest of his company, went on board another ship of Alexandria, called the *Castor* and *Pollux*, bound to Italy, which had wintered in the Island ; and sailing northward, put in at *Syracuse*, where they tarried three days ; thence they stood for *Rhegium*, and the next day, with a southerly wind, made *Puteoli*, now *Puzzoli*, a port of *Campania* in Italy. Here meeting with some Christians. the apostle at their request, staid a week with them, and then set forward on his journey towards *Rome*. The Christians at *Rome*, having heard that he was coming to the city, came to meet him, some as far as to the *Appii-forum*, 51 miles, others to the three taverns upwards of 30 miles ; which when *St. Paul* saw, he blessed God ; and took courage, finding the Christian religion not so much despised as he feared it was : they all conducted him in a kind of a triumph to the city, where being arrived *Julius* delivered his prisoners to *Burrhus*, the *Pretorian* prefect, or commander of the Emperors guards ; a man of a good disposition and reputation, who permitted *St. Paul*, probably at the recommendation of *Julius*, to live in his own private lodgings with only one soldier for a guard ; and that, more likely to defend him from the Jews, than from fear of any escape.

A. D. 61. It was towards the end of February, about five months after his departure from *Cæsarea*, that *St. Paul* arrived at *Rome*, which was the metro-

metropolis, not only of the empire, but of the world. This caused the apostle to be more diligent in his ministry; but according to his usual method, he first offered salvation to the Jews: and three days after his arrival he sent to the chief among them, desiring them to favour him with their company, who being come to his lodgings, he acquainted them with the cause of his journey, and assured them, that he was not come to make a complaint against their country-men, and insinuated, that the cause of his suffering was what their own religion had taught them. They replied, that they had received no account of him, from any of the brethren which came from Jerusalem, nor had they ever brought any charge against him; and desired to be more fully informed by him, what he had to offer, in favour of the new religion, which he had espoused, seeing it was decried by all men, both Jews and Gentiles. Upon which, the apostle appointed a set day for explaining the principles of Christianity to them: accordingly, at the time, being met together, he discoursed to them from morning till night, concerning the religion and doctrine of the Holy Jesus, proving from the promises and predictions of the old Testament, that he was the Messiah. The effect of this discourse was that they parted with disagreement and difference among themselves, some, being convinced by the force of his arguments embraced the faith of Christ, while others, persisted in their infidelity. At their departure, the apostle to stir up the unbelievers, told them, that in them was accomplished that prophetic curse of Isaiah, viz. "That they should hear with Ears, and not understand, and see with Eyes, and not perceive: for that their hearts were hardened, against their own salvation! Concluding with this solemn declaration; "Be it known unto you all, that now is salvation sent unto the Gentiles who will hearken unto it."

For the space of two years the apostle continued a prisoner at Rome, living in a house which he had hired, and constantly employed himself in preaching the word, or writing for the good of the church, receiving all who came to see him, whether out of kindness, or curiosity, to all whom he preached the gospel without any let, or molestation, and with good success, insomuch that his imprisonment was of great service to the church, promoted the propagation of the gospel, and made him famous in the emperors court, wherein he converted many to the faith, and among others one of Nero's concubines, probably Poppæa Sabina, who was made Empress, by Nero's afterward marrying her. And now it was that the apostle being at leisure, and having Luke, with him; he assisted him in the writing of his gospel.

A. D. 62. The Christians at Philippi, having heard of St. Pauls imprisonment sent Epaphroditus, their bishop to Rome, with a considerable contribution to his assistance; where he fell into a disease that endangered his life, and detained him a considerable time at Rome; which his Philippians hearing of were much troubled; upon his recovery St. Paul sent him back with his epistle to the Philippians wherein, "He gives them an account of his state at Rome; gratefully acknowledges their kindness to him; warns them against the dangerous opinions of some judaizing teachers, who had crept in among them; advises them to live in continual obedience to Christ; to avoid disputations, to delight in prayer, to be courageous under afflictions, united in love and clothed with humility. Following the example of the Lord Jesus." This epistle is of all others of the apostles the fullest of tender sentiments and affection, and indeed the Philippians deserved the same on account of their constancy in the faith, as well as their zeal for the apostle, and their concern for his sufferings: and

therefore so far is he from censuring and reproofing them, that he abounds in their praise and commendation. Shortly after the apostle turned his thoughts towards the Christian brethren at Ephesus, among whom he had lived three years, and was well acquainted with the state and condition of that place, and fearing that they might be drawn away either by some heretical, or some judaizing Christians he thought it proper to send them an epistle, in which, "He first of all commends their faith, and charity, instructs them fully in the great mysteries of the gospel, their redemption and justification; their election, the calling of the Gentiles, their union with the Gentiles in one body of which Jesus Christ is the head; and the glorious exaltation of that head among all creatures, both spiritual and temporal, and concludes with sundry excellent moral precepts both as to the general duties of religion, and the duties of their particular relations." This epistle is directed not only to the Christians of Ephesus, but to other believers so that it is generally looked upon to have been a circular letter to all the churches of the proconsular Asia. It was sent by Tychicus, whom the apostle styles his dear brother, and to whom he gave orders to take upon him the care of the church of Ephesus, during the absence of Timothy, their bishop who was with him at Rome; this epistle is by some supposed not to have been written till the year 65.

Among others of the apostles converts at Rome, was one Onesimus, a renegado, slave and a thief, who had been servant to Philemon, a person of distinction at Colosse, from whom he had run away and taken things of value with him, and had fled to Rome; but being converted by St. Paul, and instructed and baptized, he became remarkably pious, and was greatly serviceable to the apostle in his imprisonment, insomuch that he styles him his dear and faithful brother, and his son, and tho' he would

would willingly have kept him, yet being another man's servant, he sent him back to Colosse, and wrote a short letter by him to his master, which may be deemed a master piece of eloquence in the persuasive way : " containing all the arguments which friendship, religion, piety, and tenderness, can dictate to reconcile a servant to his master, earnestly desiring him to pardon his former faults, to treat him kindly and use him as a brother, (as he was now become,) and promising also that if he had wronged him or owed him any thing, he himself would not fail to repay it.

Epaphras, who had preached the gospel at Colosse, with good success, being at this time at Rome, and a prisoner with St. Paul, had given the apostle an account of their conversion, and mutual love in the spirit, but that several false teachers had endeavoured to persuade the people, that they ought not to apply to God by Jesus Christ, who since his ascension was so highly exalted, but must address the angels, who were now become the proper mediators between God, and man ; upon which account, St. Paul who had never been at Colosse, yet having a concern for all the churches of Christ, and looking upon it as the duty of his ministry, as the apostle of the Gentiles, to set them in the right way, and to unite them in perfect love and charity ; he therefore wrote to them an epistle, which he sent also by Onesimus, having joined Tychicus with him, on which account it was by some supposed to have been written Ano. 61. In this epistle, " He magnificently sets forth the glory of the Messiah, and all the benefits flowing from him, as being the image of his father, the redeemer of mankind, the reconciler of all to God, and the head of his church, which gives life and vigour to all its members ; he commends the doctrine preached to them by Epaphras, exhorting them not to suffer themselves to be beguiled in obeying

beings, by being led away with the reasoning of human philosophy, by the superstitious practices of making difference of meats, and by worshipping of angels; and then, gives them an abstract of the many chief and principal duties of the Christian life, especially such as regard the duties of husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants.

A. D. 63, The apostle having been two years, at Rome, and upwards of four years a prisoner, was at the last released, but by what means we have no account in history; but we may presume, that the Jews, not having sufficient proof against him, or being informed, that what they did alledge, was no violation of the Roman law, they thought it not proper to implead him before the Emperor, and suffered him to be discharged.

About this time it was, that our apostle, very likely upon the return of Timothy, wrote his famous and most elaborate epistle to the Hebrews! or the converted Jews, dwelling in Jerusalem and in Judea, which some think he designed for a treatise, and not an epistle, and tho' it is the longest of all his works, yet St. Paul, excuses its brevity; to this he has neither set his name nor title, most likely, because the Hebrew converts had conceived a prejudice against him, as he was not properly their apostle; or perhaps for the reverence which he bore to Christ, who was himself the apostle to the Hebrews. His design in this epistle, is to magnify Christ, and the gospel, above Moses, and the Jewish laws; and by that means, the better to establish the converted Jews, in the belief and profession of Christianity: for which end, he represents our Saviour, in his divine nature, far above all angels, and all created beings; a greater lawgiver than Moses, a greater priest than Aaron, and a greater king and priest than Melchisedec: shews the sacrifices, ceremonies,
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and observances of the law, could have no virtue in themselves, but as the types of Christ; and being now accomplished in him, were totally abolished; insists on the necessity of faith in Christ, and proves from the examples of the Patriarchs, and Prophets, that salvation is to be attained no other way than by the Merits of a dying Saviour: lastly, intersperses many excellent precepts for the regulation of their lives; exhorts them even in the midst of sufferings, to place their whole trust and confidence in Christ; and cautions them against apostacy from his religion, even in the hottest persecutions." There have been several disputes, relative to this epistle, whether it was wrote by St. Paul, or not; but as these arose not till the third Century, and ended in the fifth, and as it is now received into the sacred canon, they need not be related.

St. Paul being now at liberty, and knowing that he was an apostle to the Gentiles, and had a larger field than Rome to exercise his function in, left the city, to travel into other parts of the world, and accompanied with Timothy, now prosecuted his long intended journey into Spain, from whence it is probably conjectured, that travelling thro' Gaul, he came into Britain. Theodoret tells us, that he preached not only in Spain, but went to other nations, and brought the gospel into the Isles of the sea; and reckons Gaul, and Britain, among the nations whom the apostles, and particularly the Tent-maker, (as he styles our apostle,) converted to Christianity.

Eusebius says, that some of the apostles preached in the British Islands; St. Jerom, that St. Paul, preached in Spain, and the Western parts; and St. Clement, that he came to the utmost bounds of the West; by which, according to Ca-tullus, is to be understood Britain, and many other very probable circumstances there are, which, ma-

induce us to think, that St. Paul first planted the gospel in Britain ; for as the reverend and learned Dr. Stillingfleet observes, he had leisure and opportunity enough for the purpose, and he might be encouraged thereto, by the great number of inhabitants, transported and settled here, both in trading and military colonies by the Romans ; and from Pomponia, who was probably a Christian, and the wife to Plautius, the Roman governor in Britain ; nor is it at all unlikely, that some of the British captives, carried to Rome, with Car. Etcaus, and his family, might be among the number of converts, which St. Paul, made at Rome ; and lastly, he was the most likely of all the apostles to have come hither : upon the whole, this opinion seems to be supported, both more by positive and presumptive evidence, than any thing can be, at this distance of time, and among a people so rude and uncivilized as the Britons then were.

A. D. 64. After having staid some time in the west, our apostle returned eastward, and came to Crete, where he constituted Titus bishop of that Island, and is then supposed to have gone with Timothy into Judea, to visit the Christians in those parts ; but of this, or any farther travels of his, we have no particular account, but from his writings ; we may gather, that after a short stay in Judea, he passed into Asia ; where Timothy met him at Ephesus, whence he made a visit to the Colossians, whom he had never seen before ; and after some stay among them, returned to Ephesus again, and for their denying the resurrection of the dead, and other things excommunicated Hymeneus, and Alexander, most likely the Copper-smith, of whom he complains ; but whither it was that Alexander who attempted to address himself to the people, in the disturbance which Demetrius had formerly made at Ephesus, is a matter of doubt. Deligning to leave Ephesus, and to go into Macedonia, he enjoined
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Timothy, whom he had before made bishop of that city, to fix his residence there, and to take charge of all the proconsular Asia: arriving in Macedonia, he went the fourth time to Philippi, where staying some time, he wrote his first epistle to Timothy. "Wherein, he lays down the duties and qualifications of a bishop, as well in respect to his ministry, as in his private conversation; and instructs him in the office of a true Christian pastor." The apostle, intending to depart from hence, and to pass his winter at Nicopolis in Epirus, wrote to Titus, then in Crete, to meet him there, sending Artemas and Tychicus thither, to supply his absence. In this epistle, "he describes to Titus, (as he had before done to Timothy,) the qualifications of a Christian bishop: admonishing him, to rebuke those sharply who were naturally hard and obstinate, as the Cretans were; and not to suffer them to be led away, by the delusions of judaizing Christians, lays down precepts for people of all conditions of life: not forgetting even servants, because, as he observes, Jesus Christ, has poured out his grace upon all men."

A. D. 66. As soon as the season of the year would permit, the apostle left Nicopolis, and went again to Corinth, where he appointed Erastus to continue; thence crossing the sea into Asia, came to Ephesus, where, at his leaving him, Timothy was so overwhelmed with grief, that he shed tears. Thence he went to Miletum, not far distant, where he left his companion Trophimus sick; from Miletum he travelled to Troas, and took up his abode with Carpus, one of his scholars, with whom he left his cloak, and some books, &c. and in all probability, about this time it was, that he suffered those persecutions and afflictions, at Antioch in Pisidia, Iconium and Lystra, which he mentions (2. Tim. iii. 11.) and thanks God for his deliverance from them. But tho' God was pleased to deliver

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deliver him therefrom, yet it was not long, before he discovered to him the near approach of his death, and that he should suffer Martyrdom at Rome, which was so far from retarding his journey thither, that he hastened with joy to that city; tho' he arrived not there, till the beginning of the following year.

A. D. 67. The apostle, returning a second time to Rome, and joining St. Peter, who was then there, they both of them used their utmost endeavours to instruct the Jews, in their synagogues, and to convert the Gentiles in all public places and assemblies; labouring to instil into their minds the knowledge of the true God, and to wean them from their sensual pleasures; and, as Lactantius informs us, both our apostle and his colleague Peter, foretold, that a prince should soon arise, who should destroy the Jews, and revenge on them the contempt and abuse they had offered to the Son of God. The boldness of the apostle soon gave umbrage to the magistrates, especially to Helius, whom Nero, being himself in Achaia, had left governor of the city: who being prejudiced against St. Paul for having converted one of the Emperors concubines; he laid hold on him and put him in prison, when almost all his companions forsook him thro' fear, not chusing to run any hazard with him, only Onesephorus, his convert, who had before been serviceable to him, coming to Rome, sought him out, and administered to him in prison, not being ashamed of his chain; for which the apostle zealously prayed for the prosperity of him and his family.

St. Paul, had not laid long in prison, before St. Peter, was sent to bear him company; during their confinement, they both of them spent their time, in the most solemn acts of devotion, and, as occasion offered, preached to their guards and fellow prisoners, and are said to have converted Procellus
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and Martinian, two captains and seven and forty others.

In this last confinement, St. Paul wrote his second epistle to Timothy, the last that he ever wrote; "Wherein, he informs him of his approaching fate, desires him to come to him before the winter, because most of his companions, upon one affair or other, had left him; exhorts him to discharge all the duties of a bishop, and pastor, suitable to the instructions he had received from him, admonishes him not to forget the doctrine he had taught him, nor to be surprized at the Apostacy of some from the faith, but to exert himself the more vigorously, in the duties of his function, and acquaints him, how at his first appearing before Helius, all his companions for fear of being involved in his punishment, forsook him, but the Lord stood by him, and strengthened him, to make his preaching the more conspicuous, and effectual to the Gentiles.

A. D. 68. How long the apostle continued in prison is not certainly known, tho' generally supposed to have been about nine months; nor is any thing mentioned relative to their trial, only that they were put to death, by the order of Nero. The time being now arrived, when they were to glorify God, by their deaths, Helius, in the absence of Nero, condemned St. Paul, as a Roman, to be beheaded; a more noble death than that of St. Peter, who as an alien was crucified: (as see his life,) accordingly our apostle, was carried to a place called Aqua Salviæ, three miles out of the city; and in his way thither, converted three of the soldiers who were sent to guard him to his execution, who in a few days after became Martyrs themselves; being arrived at the place of execution, after some solemn preparation, he chearfully yielded his neck to the fatal stroke: and from the manner of his death, no doubt arose, the custom that in all pictures and images of this apostle,

he is represented, with a drawn sword in his hand.

Whether he suffered on the same day with St. Peter, or not, has been questioned, some affirming it, to have been the same day and year; others, tho' allowing the day, yet say it was in the following year; and others, that there were several years distance between them, and that St. Peter suffered at the beginning, and St. Paul, at the latter end of Nero's reign: but the first opinion seems to be the most authentic.

Thus fell this great apostle, in the 68th year of his age, and the 35th of his ministry, after having with indefatigable toil and labour, reaped a glorious harvest, of an infinite number of souls: and triumphantly carried the glad tidings of salvation, to the most considerable and most distant parts, of the then known world; discouraged by no difficulty, deterred by no opposition, nor terrified by the most severe sufferings: constantly persevering, till he had finished his course, and obtained his crown.

He was buried in the Ostian way, about two miles from Rome, and a stately church built over his grave, by Constantine the great; which was greatly enlarged and beautified, by other succeeding Christian emperors. Nicephorus informs us, that St. Paul was of a low stature and a little stooping, and the apostle seems to hint the same himself; his complexion was fair; his countenance grave; his head rather small; tho' it contained such great things; his eyes were sparkling, with eyebrows hanging over; his nose was high and gracefully bending; his speech not very agreeable; and the hair of his head and beard, thick and dark, intermixed in both with some grey hairs; his constitution was weak, often subject to disorders, and according to St. Jerom, frequently afflicted with the head-ach. But however mean the cabinet might appear, it contained treasures of inestimable value; his

his mind was strong, endued with a solid judgment, a quick invention, and a ready memory, improved by art and the advantages of a liberal education ; his humility was admirable his temperance and sobriety wholly strict, his contempt of this world great and noble, looking for a world to come ; his charity, and acts of kindness were truly generous, and without ostentation ; his piety, without dissimulation ; his zeal for the gospel and love of mens souls universal ; his labours in the duties of an apostle incessant. In the profession of his religion constant and invincible ; whereby he passed thro' a thousand dangers, and might have filled a large volume with his sufferings ; receiving stripes above measure, in prisons frequent, in deaths often ; in all his sufferings patient, counting not his life dear unto him, so he might finish his course with joy ; in the work of the Lord ; which enabled him under the sentence of death, triumphantly to cry out, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: the testimony of a good conscience, being the cause of his rejoicing, that in simplicity, and with Godly sincerity, he had had his conversation in this world.

The stile and manner of his writings, even by the confession of his enemies, was weighty and powerful: as may be seen by the fourteen epistles, already mentioned, which he left behind him; wrote in a masterly diction, adorned with all the flowers of oriental Rhetoric, and antient eloquence of expression. Which were not only instrumental in confirming the churches, to which they were directed at the first, but of great use and service to the interest of Christianity ever since. Tho' they must still be read with great humility, caution and care, since as St. Peter observes, there are some things in them hard to be understood ; which the unlearned, and unstable, wrest to their own destruction.

As to any other writings ascribed to this apostle, such as an epistle to the Laodiceans, a third to the Ephesians, his letters to Seneca the philosopher, his Acts, Revelations, his voyage to Thecla, and his sermons; they are all of them spurious and forged, and have been always rejected by the church in all ages, and exploded by all the antient writers.

The church dedicates two days to the memory of this apostle, and commemorates his conversion, Jan. 25th. and his martyrdom, together with St. Peter's, June the 29th. Though bishop Pearson, and some others, say that they suffered, February the 22d.

St. J U D E, alias T H A D D Æ U S,
alias L E B B Æ U S, Apostle and
Martyr. A. D. 72.

THIS apostle is reckoned among the brethren of our Lord, standing in the same relation to him as St. James the less, being the son of Joseph; and brother to St. James. As to his several names, he was called Thaddæus, probably to distinguish him from Judas the traitor, as well for a dislike to the name, as for distinction; or more likely, as the Jews superstitiously abstained from ever mentioning the name Jehova; so when ever any one bore a name, wherein most of the letters of that ineffable name were expressed; as in this of Jehuda or Juda, they generally changed it, for some other of the like signification, as in the present case Thaddæus, which signifies praise, as well as Judas. As to his other name Lebbæus, there are various conjectures, some, deriving it from

from the Hebrew word which signifies the heart, will have it to import the extraordinary courage and wisdom of this apostle : others extract it, from a root which signifies a Lion, in allusion to the antient prophecy of Jacob, who compares his son Judah to a lion and a lion's whelp. Dr. Lightfoot is of opinion, that this name was taken from Lebba, a town Gallilee, where he supposes this apostle to have been born, which, if his opinion be well grounded, is the most likely.

Of this apostle we have no account, till we find him enumerated by our Lord, and enrolled among the twelve apostles ; nor, is there any thing afterwards mentioned of him, except his once interrupting our Lord in his discourse, concerning his own and his father's presence, with his disciples ; which gave occasion for a fuller explication of the peculiar favours of the divine spirit, which the faithful should enjoy, to their inexpressible comfort, while the rest of the world should remain incapable of receiving them.

We may suppose that St. Jude staid at or about Jerusalem with the rest of the apostles, till they dispersed into different parts of the world, for the better spreading of the gospel ; when St. Jude's lot was Syria and Mesopotamia : He first preached the gospel in Judea and Galilee, then in Samaria and Idumæa, and the cities of Arabia. Thence went into Syria and Mesopotamia. From whence he travelled into Persia ; where, after great success in his apostolical labours, he was at last, at the instigation of the Magi, whom he had provoked, by his open rebukes of their idolatries, in worshipping the sun, and other superstitious rites, assaulted by the populace, and after many previous cruelties, was there crucified : though others say he died in peace at Edeffa ; and some that he was shot to death with arrows, at Berytus.

He left behind him one epistle, which is reckoned among the seven catholic epistles, and tho' some time disputed, yet in the end universally acknowledged, and received into the sacred canon. It seems to have been written about the year 71. and is levelled against the heresies of Menander, E-bion, Cerinthus, and the Nicholaitans. It has no particular inscription, but was probably intended for the Jewish converts in their several dispersions. It is written in the same manner with St. Peters, and with whose second epistle, it has a great affinity, and resemblance; the end of both, being to expose and set in a true light, the corrupt principles and practices of the Gnostics and other Heretics; and to that purpose in this epistle, "He first, shews his design to write to them in general, of the common salvation, to confirm them in it: but as the doctrine of Christ was attacked on every side by heretics, he thought it more necessary, to exhort them to stand up manfully in defence of the faith once delivered to the saints; and to oppose those false teachers, who so earnestly laboured to corrupt them; and that they might know these the better, he describes them in their proper colours, and foretells their future, if not their impending destruction; yet, with a true spirit of charity, he exhorts his readers, to labour by all gentle methods to save them, and to take them out of that fire, into which their own folly had cast them." This epistle is but very short, yet as Origen says of it, in a few lines, it contains many words, full of divine power and grace. That St. Jude was one of the married apostles is plain from Eusebius, by whom we are told, that Domitian, like Herod, jealous of any competitor in the empire and fearful of the coming of Christ to dethrone him, ordered all the posterity of David to be sought out and

and put to death. Upon which account two grand children of St. Jude being found, were brought before him ; as being of the posterity of David, and related to Christ ; when he strictly interrogated them of their family, their condition, and the nature of the kingdom of Christ, and when and where it would commence ; to all which they replied, with great sincerity, that they were of the family of David, and kindred to Christ ; that they were poor and lived by husbandry ; having 39 acres of land, out of which, they both paid him tribute and maintained themselves, by their own hard labour, as he might see by the hardness of their hands ; which they shewed him. That as to Christ, he was a king, but his kingdom was not of this world but heavenly, and would not take place, till the end of the world ; when he would come with great glory, to judge both the quick and the dead, and would reward all men according to their works. The emperor looking upon the meanness and simplicity of these men, as beneath his jealousies and fears, he dismissed them without any severity, as being incapable either of designing or effecting any thing to his prejudice: and Tertullian adds, that he immediately ceased the persecution against the church. While the two kinsmen our Lord, from their low estate, where now beheld, not only as kinsmen, but as martyrs of our Lord, and were honoured of all men, being preferred to the highest dignities in the church, and lived many years after.

As to the time and manner of St. Jude's death we are very much in the dark, and altogether uncertain, tho' the most generally received opinion is, that it was in Persia, by crucifixion, as I have before mentioned ; and in the year of Christ 72 ; though authors differ, both as to the time and manner.

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The church dedicates the 28 day of october to his memory, together with St. Simon, who, as some say, was martyred at the same time, and place, with St. Jude. There was a gospel said to be wrote by St. Jude; which has been always condemned as a forgery.

St. BARTHOLOMEW, alias
NATHANAEL, Apostle and
Martyr. A. D. 27.

THAT St. Bartholomew was one of the twelve apostles, is clear from sacred history, he is generally supposed to have been the same with Nathanael, and that Bartholomew was only his patronimical name derived from his father, being the son Tholomew, or Tolmai; and what makes this the more plain is, that none of the evangelists make use of the name of Nathanael but St. John, who never once makes mention of Bartholomew, and as the others in the catalogue of our Lords apostles, join Philip and Bartholomew, so St. John joins Philip and Nathanael.

He was by birth a Galilean, by trade a fisherman, and by his, and our Lord's discourse in the first of St. John, he seems to have been skilled in the doctrine and law of the Jews: some say that he was a doctor thereof. He was first brought to our Lord, by his friend Philip; when he received from the blessed Jesus himself, this honourable encomium, "Behold an Israelite indeed in whom is no guile." He was so greatly surpris'd that the Lord should know him when he had never before seen his face: that with wonder and amazement, at our Lord's telling him that he saw him

him under the fig tree, before Phillip called him, he cried out that he was undoubtedly the promised Christ, foretold by Moses and the Prophets, and he was the son of God : and he became his disciple. We have no farther mention of him in the gospel, only that he was present among the apostles, at our Lord's third appearance to them, at the lake of Tiberias.

At the division of the Apostles, St. Bartholomew's lot was the hither India, commonly called Arabia Felix ; where, and in Lycaonia and the greater Armenia, he preached the gospel ; and carried with him St. Matthew's gospel in Hebrew, which he left in India, where it was upwards of 100 years afterwards, found by Pantænus of Alexandria, who travelled in those parts : after this he went to Hierapolis in Phrygia, and was there at the death of his friend St. Philip, where by the rage of the people, he narrowly escaped Martyrdom ; and buried the body of his old friend. Some say that he was condemned by the magistrates of that city, for preaching of christianity, and endeavouring to convince the people of the folly of their idolatries ; and that he was at the same time with St. Philip fastened to the cross, with an intent of crucifixion ; but upon a sudden conviction, that divine justice would most certainly revenge their death, he was taken down again and dismissed : he departed from thence into Lycaonia, preaching the gospel ; after which, he went to Albanople in great Armenia, or more probably Albani, a city near the Caspian sea, miserably overgrown with idolatry, where while he was endeavouring to reclaim the people from their folly, he was seized on by the governor, who commanded him to be crucified ; which punishment he chearfully underwent, comforting and confirming the gentile converts to the last minute of his life ; some add that he was crucified
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with his head downwards, like St. Peter ; others that he was fhead, and his skin first taken off ; a barbarous punishment much in use in the eastern countries.

The time of his death is uncertain, but the best chronologers place it A. D. 72. The church in conformity to antient martyrologies, celebrates his feast, August the 24. He left no writings behind him, and the fabulous gospel under his name, as well as that under St. Jude's, have been sufficiently exploded.

St. THOMAS, alias DIDYMUS,
Apostle and Martyr. A. D. 73.

THIS apostle, whose proper name was Thomas, is stiled also Didymus, a word of the same signification in Greek, as Thomas in Syriac, both signifying a twin ; he was a native of Galilee, and called to be an apostle towards the latter end of the first year of our Lord's public ministry, and though the gospel gives us no account of his occupation, yet it was most probably that of a fisherman. The first notice taken of him in sacred writ, is his readiness to attend his master, though it were to his death ; for when upon the death of Lazarus, our Lord purposed to go to Jerusalem, when the other disciples were unwilling to go through fear, as the Jews had lately sought to stone their master, and therefore thinking themselves in danger, if he went they endeavoured to dissuade him therefrom, but finding him resolved, Thomas exhorted the rest of his brethren to attend him chearfully, and to share his fate ; saying unto them, " Let us also go, that we may die with him," probably concluding, that in-

instead of our Lord's raising Lazarus from the dead, they should be sent to their own Graves, with him.

A little before his passion, when our Lord took occasion to comfort his disciples against the approaching scene of woes, which would shock and discourage them ; and for their consolation assured them, that in his father's house were many mansions, and that he was going to prepare a place for them, that they might follow him, as they knew both the place whither he was going, and the way thither ; Thomas took occasion from this declaration, to tell our Lord, that he and the rest of the disciples knew not whether he was going, and asked how they could know the way. When our Lord, without reproaching him with the slowness of his understanding, replied, that he was the way, the truth and the life ; that no man could come to the Father but by him, and that if they had known him, they must necessarily know the father also. Intimating that he was the person, whom God had sent into the world, to shew men the paths of eternal life ; and if they did but follow his steps, they could not miss the way to heaven.

The next thing that we are told of, is his remarkable incredulity, in not believing his brethren, who told him, that the Lord was risen, and had appeared unto them ; but he being at that time absent, probably not having joined them, since they dispersed at the time of our Lord's being apprehended in the garden, solemnly declared, that he would not believe them, upon any other evidence, than that of his own senses, " except, says he, I shall see in his hands, the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe." When, eight days after, the disciples being assembled again, in the
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same place, and Thomas with them, our Lord, compassionating the weakness of this apostle, and willing to satisfy his doubt, appeared again to them; and after saluting them with a blessing of peace, turning to Thomas, graciously offered him all the satisfaction he desired. Thomas now fully satisfied in his faith, and truly convinced of his error, in a transport of joy, cried out, "my Lord, and my God!" A confession sufficient to convince all those who deny God and man to be one person in Christ Jesus; but our Lord then gave him to understand, that tho' he did well to believe upon this testimony of his senses, yet it was far more commendable to acquiesce in a rational evidence, and to entertain the doctrines of the gospel upon such assurances of the truth of things, as are fit to satisfy a sensible person, tho' he did not see them with his eyes; saying unto him, "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." Upon this behaviour of St. Thomas, Gregory observes, "that his infidelity, or doubt, was more useful to the cause of Christianity, than the ready belief of the other apostles, as it gave our Lord an opportunity of assuring mankind of his resurrection, by such proofs as will admit of no cavil or uncertainty.

Some days after the apostles left Jerusalem, we find Thomas, in company with some others of them, at the sea of Tiberias, or lake of Genesareth, where our Lord made his third appearance unto them on the shore, and after a whole night's toil, to no purpose, directed them to such a draught of fish, as made it appear that he was the Lord.

After the ascension of our Saviour, the province allotted to St. Thomas, was Parthia. He is reported before he left Jerusalem, to have dispatched

ed Thaddæus, one of the seventy disciples, to Edeſſa, to Abgarus the Toparch thereof (between whom, and our Saviour, letters are ſaid to have paſſed, wherein that Toparch offers to our Lord to give him one half of his kingdom, if he would come to him, and heal him of a certain chronical diſtemper he then laboured under; and that our Lord in return, after having pronounced him bleſſed for his faith in him, without having ever ſeen him, acquaints him, that he could not come to him, becauſe he muſt perform thoſe things for which he was ſent, and that after they were accompliſhed, he muſt return to him that ſent him; but would then ſend one of his diſciples who ſhould heal him. Were theſe letters authentic, they would be of great value; but tho' they are very antient, and taken out of the archives of the church of Edeſſa, and preſerved by Euſebius, yet their truth is greatly doubted.) Thaddæus however healed him, and afterwards converted him and his ſubjects to the faith.

St. Thomas travelled into Parthia, which then contained all Perſia, where he preached the goſpel to the Medes, Perſians, Camanians, Hyrcanians, and Bactrians; and tho' at firſt the moſt weak and incredulous of all the apoſtles, yet, in the end, thro' the condeſceſſion of Chriſt to ſatisfy his ſcruples, he became one of the moſt fervent, powerful, and invincible among them. In Perſia he is ſaid to have met with the Magi, or wiſe men, who brought their offerings to our newborn Saviour, whom he baptized, and made uſe of afterwards as his aſſiſtants in the propagation of the goſpel. Hence he paſſed thro' the Aſian Ethiopia, preaching the goſpel, and thence into India, being as Nicephorus relates, encouraged thereto by a divine viſion, and the promiſe of the Almighty's aſſiſtance, upon which he travelled far among the eaſtern nations, preaching the goſpel,

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and converting many to the faith, as far as to the island Trapobane, now Sumatra, and the country of the Brachmans, in all which places he preached the gospel with great success. The Portuguese, the first discoverers of these countries to the Europeans, tell us, that upon their first arrival there, they found several antient monuments, writings, and traditions, said to have been preserved ever since the apostle's time; and in that part of the country, lying between the mouths of the two great rivers, Indus and Ganges, were a set of people, called St. Thomas his Christians, who amounted to about 15 or 1600 families: that they had no dependence on the bishop of Rome, but denied his supremacy, administered the sacrament in both kinds, celebrating it with bread, seasoned with salt, and making use of the juice of raisins, steeped in water, and then pressed out, in the stead of wine, which their country did not afford; that they baptized not their children till forty days old; that they used not extreme unction; had no images in their churches, except the cross; that their priests were allowed a first, but forbid a second marriage; that they held their public assemblies every Lord's day, for prayer and preaching, and observed Advent and Lent, and the festivals relating to our Lord, and some of the saints, especially St. Thomas, and had the New Testament in the Syriac language, which the preachers earnestly exhorted the people to study; but some think these Christians of a later date than the apostle.

In India, the apostle came first to Socatara, an island in the Arabian sea, thence to Cranganor, where, having converted many, he travelled farther east, and having successfully preached the gospel, he returned into the kingdom of Coromandel; where, at Malabar, the metropolis thereof, he began to erect a church, till hindered by
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the priests and Sagamo the prince of that country ; but after having performed several miracles, he converted Sagamo himself to Christianity, and then proceeded in his building. This, much exasperated the Brachmans, who, fearing the downfall of themselves, and their religion, resolved to put a stop to him, and determined upon his death ; and accordingly, when he was one day retired out of the city, to a private place, not far distant, to offer up his private devotions : while he was intent in prayer, they assaulted him with a shower of stones and darts ; and at last, one of them more mercifully cruel than the rest, coming up to him, thrust him thro' with a lance. His body was taken up by his disciples, and interred in the church which he had lately erected at Malabar.

In the time of John the third, King of Portugal, while Don Alphonso, one of the viceroys in India, resided in these parts, certain brass tables, which had been dug up, were brought to him, with inscriptions so antient, that they could scarce be read ; till at last, by the help of a Jew, a very learned antiquarian, they were found to contain a donation made to St. Thomas, of a piece of ground to build a church on in Malabar, by king Sagamo.

They tell us also of a cross found in St. Thomas's chapel, at Malabar, whereon was an unintelligible inscription, of which a learned Bramin, whom they compelled to read and expound it, gave the following account, " That Thomas, a divine person, was sent into those countries by the Son of God, in the reign of king Sagamo, to instruct them in the knowledge of the true God ; that he built a church, and performed many miracles ; but at last as he was upon his knees at prayers, was, by a Brachman, thrust thro' with

a spear, and that, that cross, stained with his blood, had been left as a memorial of these matters. What credit or confidence is to be placed in these Portuguese relations, I leave to the judicious reader to determine ; for, as I cannot affirm them to be true, neither will I condemn them as absolutely false.

St. Thomas, according to the most authentic accounts, suffered A. D. 73. The church observes the 21st of December, as the day of his martyrdom. Several books have been attributed to him, but as it is not certain that he left any writings behind him, they have been all condemned as forgeries, as his Acts, by Lucius Carinus, his voyages and gospel, by the Manichees, and some others.

St. L U K E, Evangelist and Martyr,
A. D. 74.

ST. LUKE was a native of Antioch, the metropolis of Syria, a city famous for the pleasantness of its situation, fertility of its soil, riches of its traffic, the wisdom of its senate, learning of its professors, and the civility and politeness of its inhabitants ; and, above all, for its being the place where the disciples were first called Christians. It was embellished with an university, filled with learned professors in every art and science, so that our apostle could not well miss of a liberal education ; and he not only studied here, but in other famous schools, both in Greece and Egypt, and made himself a proficient in most branches of literature. And as the Grecian academies were particularly famous for the study

study of phyfic, so the evangelist made that his principal study, and became eminent therein; and applied himself to the practice thereof, even after his conversion, which was so far from being inconsistent with, that it was rather serviceable to the gospel, as it gave him an opportunity of administering a cure to the body and soul at the same time. But here we are to consider, that physicians were not then of that eminence as they are in our days, but were generally of no higher rank than servants, most great men keeping one of them in his house; whence some have thought, that St. Luke, with all his accomplishments, tho' a Syrian by birth, was only a servant at Rome, where he professed phyfic, and practised it; and whence, being manumitted, he returned into his own country. He is also said to have been skillful in painting, and several pieces, pretended to have been drawn and painted by him, are still extant, and an antient inscription found in a vault, near St. Mary's church, in the Broad Way at Rome, with a Latin inscription, importing it to have belonged to a picture of the blessed virgin Mary, and to have been one of the seven painted by St. Luke, ("Una ex vii ab Luca depictis.") give some authority to prove his proficiency in that art.

Whether he was a Jewish proselyte, or an heathen, before his conversion to the faith, is altogether uncertain, and that he was one of the seventy disciples, is altogether inconsistent with himself, as he tells us, that the facts recorded in his gospel, were not of his own knowledge, but communicated to him by those who had been eye witnesses, and ministers of the word from the beginning, and therefore it is not improbable, but he might be a Jewish proselyte, and highly so, that he was converted by St. Paul at Antioch, during his residence in that city, and afterwards became an inseparable companion of all that ap-

apostle's travels and sufferings, if not immediately from his first conversion, yet at least from the time of St. Paul's going into Macedonia; for there in his account of that apostle's actions, he changes his stile, and includes himself, as a party concerned in the remaining part of the narrative (as see Acts xvi. 10.) From that time, he followed St. Paul in all dangers, was with him at his several arraignments at Jerusalem, accompanied him in his dangerous voyage to Rome, at which city he still attended on him to serve his necessities, and to supply those ministerial Offices which the apostle's confinement would not permit him to discharge. While the evangelist continued at Rome, during St. Paul's confinement, it was that he wrote his gospel, which he dedicates to Theophilus, who by the title of Most Excellent being given him, seems to have been some considerable magistrate of Antioch, whom either St. Luke himself, or St. Paul had converted to the faith; and the reason of this dedication, as well as of that of the Acts of the Apostles, to the same person, was most probably not only as a testimony of his respect, but also a means of giving him farther information in those things wherein he had been instructed.

The occasion of St. Luke's writing his gospel, was, as himself informs us, partly to prevent those false and fabulous relations of our Lord's doctrine and works, which even then began to be obtruded upon the world; and accordingly this evangelist, is more circumstantial in relating of facts, and more exact in the order and method of them, than either of the other two, who wrote before him. As the story of Zacharias, the generation of John the Baptist, the annunciation of the Blessed Virgin, the salutation of Elizabeth, at her first interview with her, the occasion of Joseph and Mary's going to Bethlehem

hem, the circumstances of our Saviour's birth, the publication thereof to the shepherds, the testimony of Simeon and Anna in the temple; our Lord's arguing with the doctors at 12 years old: all which, he is by some supposed, on account of his exactness therein, to have received from the Virgin Mary herself, with whom they suppose him to have been well acquainted, and to have had some share in her confidence. These, and some other pieces of history, as well as of the other, the parables of the lost sheep and piece of money, the prodigal son, Dives and Lazarus, &c. are not related by any other of the evangelists. His history therefore, is an excellent supplement to what they have omitted; nor is it the less authentic, because he himself was not an eye witness of what he wrote, since if we consider the persons from whom he derived his account, he had a sufficient stock of intelligence to proceed upon, thro' the whole of his gospel, which makes an history, according to a precise reckoning of 38 years wanting one month, beginning with the angel Gabriel's foretelling John the Baptist's birth, and ending with the ascension of our blessed Saviour; containing more variety and written in purer Greek, than either two, tho' not without some Hebraisms. He chiefly insists on what relates to our Lord's Sacerdotal office, and tho' recording other parts of the evangelical story, yet it is ever with a peculiar respect to his priesthood; a thing properly aimed at by St. Luke, who was a gentile, and assisted by an apostle of the uncircumcision; as it shewed the christian priesthood to be more excellent than the Jewish. For which reason in our Saviour's genealogy, he designs not so much to shew him to be the seed of Abraham, in whom the Jews trusted, as the seed of the woman, in whom the Gentiles were also to expect salvation; and in other parts of his gospel, he is very particular in those discourses, or parables of our Saviour, which

which relate to the rejection of the Jews and the call of the Gentiles. Which when finished by the evangelist, obtained the sanction and approbation of the great apostle of the Gentiles, to authenticate and confirm it; for which reason it is, that, that apostle writing to Timothy, calls it his gospel. Some think this gospel was written from Achaia, some years before, and before St. Paul wrote his second epistle to the Corinthians, because in that he mentions, the brother whose praise is in the gospel, which they refer to St. Luke; but it seems more probable, that it was wrote during St. Paul's first imprisonment at Rome; and about the year 61, 28 years after our Lord's ascension.

About a year or two after, viz. the beginning of the year 63, it was that St. Luke wrote his Acts of the apostles, which he dedicates to the same nobleman as his gospel, and of which it is indeed a continuance, beginning at our Saviour's ascension and continuing till after St. Paul's arrival at Rome, after his appeal to Cæsar, and so, that and his gospel, properly speaking, are but one history, divided into two parts. And the main difference between them is, that in the former he wrote from the information of authentic witnesses, in the latter from his own knowledge of, and personal concern in the greatest part of the things which he relates.

His chief design in this work, was to write a true history of the apostles, and the foundation of the church, in opposition to the false Acts and false histories, which began to be dispersed about in the world. He does not however take in an account of all the apostles, but only the most remarkable actions of the chief apostles, both of the circumcision and the uncircumcision; of the Jews, St. Peter and St. John; and of the Gentiles, St. Paul and Barnabas; with the planting and in-crease

crease of the gospel among the Gentiles ; and of these he give us but a summary account, carrying his account of St. Peter no lower than his deliverance from Herod's imprisonment and the death of his persecutor, which happened in the year 44. tho' St. Peter lived 24 years after that : and his account of St. Paul is imperfect, and proceeds no farther than his arrival at Rome, in the year 61. After which he lived 7 years.

However he is more particular in his account of St. Paul, than of any other of the apostles, both as he was the most active in the cause of christianity, and as he was his constant attendant and an eye witness of the whole carriage of his life, and privy to his most intimate transactions, and therefore capable of giving a fuller relation of them, than of any others ; nor was it our evangelist's design to compose a large volume, but only to single out a few things as he thought necessary for the instruction of the faithful ; and this work may be deemed, " An historial demonstration of the truth of the gospel ; " for, therein we see our Lord's promises fulfilled in his resurrection and ascension, in the descent of the Holy Ghost, the wonderful progress of his religion, and the call of the Gentiles ; containing an history of about 30 years transactions, wrote in an exact and accurate manner, an elegant and polite stile, sublime and noble, easy and perspicuous, flowing with a natural grace and sweetness, adapted to the historical design and expressed in purer language than any other of the sacred writings.

After St. Paul's enlargement, it is most probable that St. Luke accompanied him in the rest of his travels, and returned again to Rome with him, as we find him there in the year 68, when St. Paul wrote his second Epistle to Timothy, a little before his death, of which it is not unlikely

likely the evangelist was a sorrowful spectator. And, during his last confinement, he continued his attendance, till the apostle had finished his course, and had obtained the crown of martyrdom; by which kind offices he so endeared himself to St. Paul, that he styles him his fellow-labourer, the beloved physician, and the brother whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches.

How St. Luke bestowed himself after the death of St. Paul, we have no certain account: some are of opinion that he returned into the east, and converted many to the faith, and constituted pastors in all the churches, preaching both in Egypt and Lybia: others think that he travelled into Galatia, Dalmatia, Italy and Macedonia, where he spared no pains, declined no dangers, that he might faithfully discharge the trust committed to him.

As to his death, some fix it in one place, some in another; some that he died a natural, some a violent death, tho' the most general received opinion is, that he suffered martyrdom, of which Nicephorus gives the following account, That coming into Greece, to Patras, a city of Achaia, where preaching with great success, he gained a great number of converts, until a party of infidels made head against him, drew him to execution, and, for want of a cross, for the more immediate dispatch, hanged him on an olive-tree, in 84th year of his age, according to St. Jerom. Nor have we any greater certainty as to the time, than the manner of his death; the most probable account is, that it happened A. D. 74. To his memory the church dedicates the 18th day of October.

St. SIMON, Apostle and Martyr,

A. D. 74.

THIS apostle, is by some thought to have been one of the brothers of our Lord, the sons of Joseph, by his first wife; but for this I find no other authority than his name, being the same with one of them: he is called the Canaanite, not on any account of his being a native of Cana in Galilee, but to distinguish him from the other Simon, surnamed Peter; and for the same reason he is also called Zelotes, a word of the same sense as the former, both signifying zeal. Whether this title was given him on the account of any personal warmth, remarkable in him, or whether he was of that sect of the Jews, who were called Zealots, is wholly uncertain; if on the latter account, his conversion is the more remarkable. For nothing could be more opposite to the meekness and gentleness of Christianity, than the hot and fiery spirit with which that sect was actuated.

It has been by some conjectured, that he was the bridegroom, whose wedding our Lord honoured with his company, and adorned the solemnity with his first miracle of changing the water into wine. We have no account in the gospel of this apostle, only his appointment with the rest to the apostolical office. After our Lord's ascension, he continued with the apostles, and other disciples at Jerusalem, joining in worship and communion with them, and did not leave that city till after the descent of the Holy Ghost, when they were all furnished with the necessary gifts, in order to the exercise of their ministry throughout the world.

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Upon the dispersion of the apostles, he is said to have preached in Egypt, Cyrene, and Africa, thence to have gone into the barbarous parts of Lybia, and Mauritania, and to have turned many to the faith in Christ. To these, some add, Mesopotamia, where, say they, meeting with St. Jude, he travelled with him into Persia, and there with his companion, received the crown of martyrdom ; which tradition, I presume, may be the reason why the church commemorates them both together in one festival. But others, as positively affirm, that from Mauritania, he brought the gospel over to the Western Islands ; and, came into Britain ; where, having converted and baptized many, and wrought many miracles, and suffered many persecutions, for the sake of Christ and the gospel, he was at last there crucified, by the then rude and barbarous inhabitants of this island, and here buried.

Chronologers place his death in the year 74. And the church commemorates him, together with St. Jude, on the 28th day of October. But we have no certain account either of the time or manner of his death ; and tho' the latter is the more general opinion ; yet, from the two apostles being joined in one festival, it is not improbable that they suffered together, and if so, then he died A. D. 72. But the time and manner of both their deaths, is altogether uncertain.

St. J O H N the Divine, Evangelist,
Apostle, Prophet and Martyr. A.D. 100.

ST. John whom the gospel distinguishes by the title of the beloved disciple, was a Galilean, the son of Zebedee and Salome, and brother to James the great ; together with whom he was brought up, to their father's business of fishermen: he had some estate left him by his father, in Galilee, which he sold to Annas, the high priest, and therewith purchased an handsome house about mount Sion, where he afterwards dwelt.

Before his call by our Lord, he had been a disciple to John the Baptist, and is supposed to have been that other disciple, who was present with Andrew, when the baptist declared Jesus to be the son of God, and who thereupon, followed him to the place of his abode. Tho' he at that time left him, and returned to his occupation ; but when afterwards our Lord called him from his fishing, in the sea of Galilee, he immediately left his father and business and followed him; and was afterwards not only one of the twelve, but one of the three, to whom our Lord, thought proper to communicate, the most private passages of his life, to which the other apostles had not the honour to be admitted ; he was present at his restoring the daughter of Jairus to life, saw his transfiguration in the mount, and heard the voice from heaven, pronouncing him his son; and was one of his companions in his solitude and most retired devotions in the garden, and beheld the agonizing pains, which the sins of men had brought on the son of God. So that, whatever was most remarkable in their blessed masters actions, which he saw convenient for a season to conceal, was deposited as a secret in these faithful hands. The convincing evidence of his God-head,

and manhood, the brightest lustre of the one, and the lowest humiliation of the other, all that could speak a particular confidence and kindness, was reserved for a retreat with those select friends of whom tho' so few, yet St. John had constantly the privilege to make one. And even of these three intimates of our Lord, he seems to have had some preference, before either St. Peter, or his elder brother James; and to be known by the most desirable of all titles, the disciple whom Jesus loved; he had the honour of leaning on his Lords bosom, or sitting next to him at table; and at the last supper, when our Lord had declared that one of them should betray him, and they were all anxious to know who it was, not one of them, not even Peter himself, had courage to ask the question, but beckoned to John to do it for them; and he complied with their request; and presuming on his intimacy with our Lord, asked which of them he meant, and received a private answer, that it was he to whom he should give a sop, which according to the signal, he shortly after gave to Judas Iscariot. After our Lord was apprehended, tho' he at first left him with the rest of the disciples, yet assuming his courage, he followed him to the high priest's house, where thro' his acquaintance with Annas, to whom he had, as before mentioned, sold his estate; he gained an easy admittance, not only for himself, but for Peter also; and followed our Lord thro' the several passages of his trial, and waited on him to the cross, where as the highest instance of his affection, our Lord in his expiring moments, recommended his sorrowful and disconsolate mother to his care; who from that time, he took home to his own house on mount Sion, and provided for her during the residue of her life. These particular marks of esteem from his Lord, have by some been attributed to this apostles eminent modesty, by others to his unspotted chastity, others to an indulgence due to his youth

youth, be being the youngest of all the apostles, and to the pregnancy of his virtue and knowledge; but they seem the most probable, who have imputed it, to his nearness of relation, being first cousin to his master, and to a peculiar sweetness of disposition, which conspired to recommend him to our Lords particular regard. Such likeness of disposition, and proximity in blood, was a natural and reasonable motive for some difference to be made; so it was not unbecoming the son of God, made man, nor was it any disparagement to the rest of his disciples, who were not in the same circumstances with our apostle.

Nor was the apostle wanting in gratitude and return of love, but shewed many instances of fervent zeal for his masters honour, and tenderness to his person, as appears in his desiring fire might be called for down from heaven, to punish a Samarian city, which had affronted his Lord, and to make an example of them for despising so great a prophet, as Elijah had before done, to some who had angered him; but this our Lord rebuked, and brought him to a more gentle temper; in his attendance on his master, during his sufferings; and in the tender filial piety he shewed to the virgin mother, in obedience to his Lord's command. On the first news of our Lords being risen, we find St. John running eagerly to the tomb, and finding it open, tho' he did not at the first go in, yet upon Peters arrival he entered with him, and took a careful view of every thing therein; when our Lord appeared at the sea of Galilee, our Evangelist was the first who discerned who it was; and it was then, that Peter, having received an item of his death, asked what St. John was to do? And received for answer, what if I will that he tarry till I come? Intimating, that he should live to see Christ come, to take vengeance on the Jews, in their final destruction,

which he lived to see accomplished : by which some at that time understood that he should not die at all.

After our Lords ascension, we find a continued intimacy between Peter and John, they were together when the lame man was cured in the Temple ; were apprehended, thrown into prison and released together ; these two, were made choice of, by the rest of the apostles, to confirm the new converts, in Samaria, who had been instructed in the faith, by Philip the deacon. And these two, together with James, are stiled pillars of the church, to whom it was that St. Paul addressed himself, and from whom he received the right hand of fellowship, and with them it was agreed, what part he should take in the propagation of the gospel.

Upon the division of the world among the apostles, the part which fell to St. John's lot was Asia ; tho' he did not immediately enter upon his charge, but staid some time at Jerusalem, till the death of the Virgin Mary, which happened about fifteen years after our Lords ascension ; when being released from his charge, he went into Asia, and industriously applied himself to the propagation of the gospel, preaching in places where it had not yet been planted ; and founded many churches of note and eminency ; fixing his chief residence at Ephesus, where tho' St. Paul, had before founded a church and constituted his beloved Timothy bishop thereof, yet St. John considering that as a city of great resort, on the account both of its traffic, and the conveniency of its port ; he thought that he could not be more commodiously situated than in this place, for the dispersing of his doctrine to several nations at once ; and for the care of all the Asian churches, his apostolic authority being in no manner limited, but extended all over Asia ; nor did his abode at Ephesus, in the least deprive Timothy of his episcopal authority conferred on him by St. Paul.

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The churches in Asia, founded by St. John, were Smyrna, which he established about the year 82, and constituted his disciple Polycarp bishop therefore; Pergamus, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea, and Thyatira, which together with Ephesus, make up the seven churches of Asia, to whom he directs his book of Revelations. The time when St. John settled in Ephesus is not certainly known, tho' generally believed to have been about the year 68; It is not however to be supposed, that this evangelist confined his ministry to Asia alone, but that he preached in other parts of the East also, probably in Parthia, his first epistle being antiently entitled to them; and the Bassoræ, a people of Judea, constantly affirm from antient tradition, that St. John first planted the gospel among them. During the abode of our evangelist at Ephesus, he is reported by Apollonius, to have raised a man from the dead: and to have deposed a priest of Asia, for writing a fabulous account of the pretended voyage of St. Paul to Theela; altho' he composed that work, in honour of the apostle. We are also told from Polycarp, who was his disciple, that while he was at Ephesus, going one day with some friends to a Bath, he enquired of the servant, that waited, who was within; and being answered Cerinthus, some say Ebion, (two arch Hereticks,) (and it is not improbable but that they might be both there) which the apostle no sooner understood, that in abhorrence to them, he turned back, saying to his companions, "let us escape hence my brethren, lest the building fall upon our heads, as the great enemy of God and the truth is in it;" by this example, teaching us to avoid the society of such as abuse and corrupt the truth.

A. D. 95. St. John having staid in Ephesus for the space of 27 years, he was accused before Domitian, (who had began a severe persecution against the church) as an assertor of Atheism, and

impiety, and a public subverter of the religion of the empire ; upon which, the tyrant ordered him to be sent bound to Rome, where being arrived, he commanded him to be cast into a caldron of boiling, or rather burning Oil ; that is, Oil set on fire ; in the presence of all the Roman senate ; which was accordingly done ; but his Lord Christ, who had favoured him above all the apostles ; and had reserved him for farther services to the truth, restrained the heat of the Caldron, as he had done the fiery Furnace of Nebuchadnezzar ; and preserved his servant in this death, that he received no harm from it, but came out more active and vigorous than before. Thus did this apostle receive the honour of martyrdom, without suffering the torments, or leaving it in the power of men to take away his life ; and in this was accomplished, what our Lord, had foretold, "that he should drink of the cup of his passion." And from hence the antients gives him the title of Martyr, being so intentionally, tho' not in fact, yeilding his body to the torments and being willing to die for Christ, while the merciless Emperor, a greater tyrant and more an infidel than Nebuchadnezzar, unmoved and hardened, against this miracle, and the evangelists deliverance, without any farther consideration, banished him to Patmos, a disconsolate Island in the Archipelago : there to be employed in digging in the mines, the common punishment for persons banished thither for any crime.

In this disconsolate situation. the almighty filled the mind of his servant, with spiritual comforts, and gave him a clear prospect of the future state of christianity, in the several visions, which he has transmitted to us in his book of the revelations ; which was written, as is most generally believed during his banishment and in the year 96, in a prophetick stile, and contains in the first part thereof, an admonition to the bishops of the seven churches
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In Asia, with advice to them concerning their flocks, dictated by Christ himself, as the evangelist informs us ; wherein are many clear truths, by which humble and modest christians may profit, without concerning themselves with the prophecies, the explanation whereof, may be above their capacities.

Some of the antients, on the account of the mysteriousness and obscurity of this book, were dubious whether it should be admitted into the sacred canon ; but it being plainly made appear by a number of witnesses, that it was really the evangelist St. John's writing, it was received by the church, and since the fourth century has never been in the least questioned. For besides the testimony of Polycarp, who was St. John's disciple, Ignatius, Justin martyr, Irenæus, Clement and Tertullian, all authors of the second century, are unanimous, in ascribing this book to the same hand with the epistles and gospel ; and the book itself proves its author ; it was written in the island of Patmos, whither none but St. John were banished ; it is directed to the seven churches of Asia, all of which had either been planted, or cultivated by him ; and several other circumstances, which might be mentioned, which, together with the apostolic doctrine contained therein, do evidently prove it to have been the work of St. John, and consequently of divine and canonical authority. And as to the stile which some object to, as not the same with the other pieces of the evangelist's writing, it is well known, that every good author will vary his stile, according to his subject ; and will use in history, the plain and simple ; in epistles the familiar ; and in orations and prophecies, the majestic and sublime : what wonder is it then, that in subjects so different as what he treats of, the evangelist did not always observe the same tenor and method of writing.

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The evangelist, as Victorinus observes, finding himself condemned to great pains and labour, at an age when he was unable to endure hardships, despaired of life, and wished to finish all by death; but God was pleased to undeceive and comfort him by a divine vision, which revealed to him, "that he must yet prophesy, before many people and nations and tongues and kings," by which his enlargement was foretold, which happened soon after.

A, D. 97, Domitian being dead, he was succeeded by Nerva, a prince of generosity, moderation and clemency; who repealed the rigorous acts of his predecessor, and recalled the exiles of the late reign. St. John taking the advantage thereof, returned from Patmos to his friends at Ephesus. When the evangelist came to Ephesus, he found that Timothy the bishop of that city had been martyred, and the see vacant; and though he was now 90 years old, yet upon the earnest solicitation of the bishops of that province, he took upon himself the care of the large province of Minor Asia; erected churches, or rather oratories, and disposed of the clergy in the best manner the circumstances of the time would permit: and notwithstanding his great age, made several journeys into the neighbouring provinces, to settle and confirm churches.

And now it was, that he wrote his epistles, the first of which is stiled catholic, and calculated as it were for all times and places; "containing most excellent rules for the conduct of the christian life, pressing the duties of love, charity, holiness and purity of manners: not to be led away with the crafty insinuations of Seducers, and false teachers:" and tho' the apostle has thought proper to conceal his name through his usual modesty, yet this epistle was universally received and never doubt-

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ed: it was antiently directed to the Parthians, but for what reason is unknown, unless it may be, that St. John himself had heretofore preached to them. His two other epistles are very short, and some have doubted of their being canonical, ascribing them to another John; which dispute continued till the end of the fourth century; but since that time they have been universally received. The first of the two is directed to a christian lady, whose name is thought to have been Electa; in this, "the apostle recommends her, and her children's piety; encouraging them to charity and exhorting them to good works." The other is directed to Gaius or Caius, whom some think was one of St. Paul's disciples, and if so, it was more likely Gaius of Derbe than of Corinth. "Herein the evangelist commends his hospitality to the faithful, exhorting him to exercise it chearfully, to those who are employed in the churches service."

The Christians now considering that St. John was the only surviving apostle, and that they had not reason to expect his continuance long among them, as he had already greatly surpassed the utmost limits of the age of man; and foreseeing that his death would be an advantage to the heretics, earnestly begged of him, that he would furnish them with weapons against them, when at the request of all the Asiatic bishops, and others, deputed from several eminent churches, he set about writing of his gospel: to which end he first ordered a general fast to be proclaimed, to beg a blessing on so great and momentous an undertaking, which being performed, he set about the work; in, which as there were at that time several heretics sprung up in the church, as the Cerinthians, Ebionites, and Nicholaitans, all of whom denied the divine nature of our Saviour; therefore, as the other three evangelists had shewn the humanity of Christ, as he was king, priest, and pro-

prophet ; so our evangelist soared above them, and manifested his divinity, proving Christ to be God, from all eternity, and before his incarnation ; that as the other evangelists had written a series of his generation, according to the flesh, he might write a spiritual gospel, beginning with the divinity of Christ, which was, as it were, a subject reserved for him, by the Holy Ghost, and by which, together with his revelations, he acquired the name of the Divine. A second reason for his writing his gospel was, that he might supply those passages of the evangelical history, which the rest of the sacred writers had omitted. Having therefore collected the other evangelists, and viewed them carefully, he first ratified the truth of them, and then added his own gospel to the rest ; in which he sets down particularly the actions of our Saviour, from his temptation in the wilderness, to the imprisonment of John the Baptist, where the others were greatly defective. The historical part begins after our Lord's temptation, and takes in a less compass than the least of the others, and tho' it appears to have been written to supply the defects and omissions of the others, recording our Lord's discourses, rather than his miracles, preserving the order of time more perfectly, and distinguishing exactly the four passovers, of which we have only an intimation in the other evangelists, and finished in so very excellent and sublime a manner, that the ancients generally compared the writer to an eagle soaring among the clouds, beyond the reach of human eye, (for which cause this evangelist is depicted with an eagle by his side.) St. Basil, speaking of his gospel, says, " That as the evangelical writings transcend all other parts of the holy scriptures, because in other parts God speaks to us by his servants the prophets, but in

in the gospel, our Lord, who is God blessed for evermore, speaks to us himself; so, among the evangelical preachers, none is like St. John, the son of thunder, for the sublimity of his discourses which are beyond man's capacity, duly to reach, or perfectly to comprehend." The very heathen philosophers admired St. John's writings, and an eminent platonist declared, "that the first sentence of his gospel ought to be written in letters of gold, and placed in the front of all churches." This gospel was originally written in Greek, and abounds with Hebraisms, as much as the others. The author's words are peculiar to himself, and his phrases used in an uncommen sense, which may possibly render his method of writing not so agreeable to the nice judges of eloquence. In quotations from the old testament, tho' he sometimes uses the septuagint, yet he generally translates from the Hebrew original, and most commonly renders word for word. For he being an Hebrew of the Hebrews, was admirably skillful in the language of his own country, which, it is likely, made him less exact in his Greek compositions, wherein he had no advantage but what he received from the Holy Ghost. However, what he wanted in the exactness and politeness of his stile, he abundantly recompensed in the excellency and sublimity of his matter, for he spake and wrote like the son of thunder.

A. D. 99. St. John still proceeded in his duty, with all imaginable care and tenderness, and with all the vigour his great age would permit, being now upwards of 90 years of age; as a remarkable instance of which we have it recorded, that St. John, coming to a city near Ephesus, which some think to have been Smyrna, he saw an handsome young man, of ready parts and knowledge, with whom being much taken, he delivered him to the
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bishop of the place, with a strict charge for his education and instruction ; twice repeating to the bishop, "I commend this young man to you, to be looked to with the greatest care and diligence, and that in the presence of Christ and the church." The bishop readily undertook the charge, received the young man into his house, instructed, and afterwards baptized him. After which, as if this sacrament was a guard against all temptations, and his pupil out of danger ; the good man thought he might a little relax the reins of discipline, and allow the young man some liberty ; when he making an ill use thereof, fell into bad company, where he soon forgot the pious instructions he had learned ; falling from one wickedness to another, till he had stifled all remorse, and let loose the reins of unbounded vice ; when he and his associates combined together, with a band of robbers, took to the highway, and made him their captain ; who soon became as much superior to the rest in fierceness and cruelty, as he was in power. Some time after, the apostle returning to the same place, after having dispatched his other affairs, required from the bishop the treasure he had committed to his charge ; which the bishop not readily understanding, he replied, "he required the young man his brother, whose soul he trusted to his care." The old man, with tears in his Eyes, answered, "he is dead ;" and being again interrogated, by what kind of death, he replied, "he's dead to God ; for alas he is become a villain, and is fled with his companions to the mountains to be a thief, and is plunged into all manner of wickedness and debauchery." The evangelist surprised and afflicted at this news, expressed his concern by a deep sigh, and having reproached the bishop with negligence, he resolved to find him out ; and ordering an horse and a guide to be got ready, without considering the danger of venturing him-
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self among men of desperate fortunes and abandoned consciences; he hastened to the mountains, the usual place of their rendezvous; where, as they always kept a guard, he was stopped by the centinels, when he desired to be carried to the commander of that company, and if his death was inevitable, to perish by his hand. The captain, who stood at a distance off, compleatly armed; no sooner perceived the apostle approaching, but with a mixture of shame and fear, he fled with the utmost precipitation. St. John not regarding his own age and weakness, followed him with all possible speed, but as he could not overtake him, he passionately intreated him to stay, calling out to him; "why, my son, do you fly from your aged and unarmed father? Take pity on me, and fear not, there is yet hope of salvation for thee; I will undertake with Christ for thee; I am ready to lay down my life, and to die for thee, as our Lord did for us all; only stay and believe me, for be assured, that I am sent by Christ." Deeply affected at this expostulation, the young man stood still; and with downcast eyes, threw away his arms; and bathed in tears embraced his spiritual father; and became, as it were, rebaptized with the flood from his Eyes. The evangelist seeing his confusion and sorrow, gave him fresh assurances of pardon, and kneeling down prayed with him, comforted him, and returned him a true penitent convert to the church; leaving a noble example of true love and compassion, for erring and wandering souls.

A. D. 100. This year a fresh storm arose against the Christians, in many parts of the empire, but did not reach Ephesus, where this evangelist resided, who therefore pursued his duty in peace, tho' extremely weak and declining in body; he daily urged to his auditors, the duties of love and kindness one to another, and being worn out with age, and thro' weakness of body, unable to attend the

church or Christian assemblies, but as he was carried by his disciples; and when there, unable to make any long discourse, he only urged this general duty; "my dear Children, love one another," and when his audience, weary with hearing the same thing so often repeated, asked him, "why he always repeated the same thing," and what was the reason, he did not say something new to them, he replied, "This is what our Lord himself has commanded, and if we can perform this, we do enough." An answer truly worthy of the favourite disciple of our Lord, and who had learned this essential duty on his masters breast. Having now arrived to the 99th year of his life, and outlived all the other apostles, by many years, done inestimable service to the church, in many parts of the world, both in spreading the gospel and confounding of heresies; he left this life for a better, and died in peace at Ephesus, near an hundred years of age; or as some say more, and tho' he did not die a violent death, yet, when we consider, the burning Caldron, his banishment, imprisonments, and other sufferings for the gospel, we may justly stile him a Martyr, for the sake of Christ.

Touching the death of this apostle, the antient authors are divided, some saying that he never died at all, but only rested in his grave at Ephesus, like a man who was asleep, which St. Augustine seems inclinable to believe, having received it, as he says, from very credible witnesses; and from some apocryphal writings adds, that it was generally known, that when St. John, then in health, had ordered his grave to be dug, and prepared, he laid him self down therein, as in his bed, and fell asleep; Nicephorus relates the story at full after the following manner: St. John foreseeing his translation into heaven, took the clergy of Ephesus, and several of his faithful followers a little out of the city to a Cemetery, whither he used to retire to prayer; and very earnestly recommended to them the care

of the church, and addressed himself to God in earnest prayer for their protection ; after which he commanded a grave to be opened, which being done, he instructed his friends in the precepts and abstruse mysteries of theology ; confirmed them in the practice of religion, and commended them to the care and protection of Jesus Christ : then solemnly taking leave of them, he signed himself with the sign of the cross ; and in their presence went down into his grave, and laid him down ; strictly charging them, to put on the grave stone, and to make it fast ; and to come the next day, to open it, and take a view of him ; which injunction they as strictly obeyed, and coming the next day and opening the tomb, they found nothing but the grave-clothes, which he had left behind him. Contrary to this, the Arabic writer of his life reports, that there were none present at this apostle's burial, but his disciple Phrogfir (probably he means Prochorus, one of the seven deacons who constantly attended him) whom he strictly charged never to discover his sepulchre to any one, very likely for the same reason that the body of Moses is thought to have been concealed, to prevent any idolatrous worshipping of his reliques, or adoration at his tomb. Though the turks say, that he was buried in Lydia, and pay great honour and veneration to the place. What credit is to be given to these stories, I leave to the decision of the judicious reader, but this is certain, that they have caused several impostors to spring up in the church, pretending themselves to have been St. John, come again even as low as to the time of Beza.

St. John seems to have always led a single life, for which also we have the testimony of the ancients. In his natural temper, he was warm and resolute, apt to be provoked, and easily inflamed ; but this, his reduced age brought to a more staid and solid temper. He was polished by no arts of

learning or study; but what was wanting in this was abundantly supplied by the furniture of Divine Graces, with which he abounded. His humility was great, as may be observed from his writings, wherein he never styles himself either apostle or evangelist, but only the presbyter, or elder, and that but very sparingly, and rather alluding to his age than any office or dignity in the church: and when he speaks of the disciple whom Jesus loved, he constantly conceals his own name, and leaves the reader to guess who is meant. Love and charity he constantly practised himself, and as affectionately recommended it to others; it is the great vein which runs thro' all his writings, especially his epistles, where he urges it as the great and peculiar law of Christianity, without which, all other pretences are vain and insignificant. This was his practice to his dying day; and this, like his blessed Master, he left as a legacy to his followers. He left many eminent disciples behind him, whom he had fully instructed in the faith, and who became eminent fathers in the church, the chief of whom were Ignatius, Polycarp, and Papias, bishop of Hierapolis. He is supposed to have died on the 27th day of December, in the year 100, which day the church consecrates to his memory. He lived the longest of any of the apostles, and was the only one who escaped a violent death.

St. BARNABAS, Apostle and Martyr.
A. D. 73.

ST. BARNABAS was a native of Cyprus, in the Mediterranean Sea, a Jew of the tribe of Levi, born of rich and pious parents, by whom he was

was sent to Jerusalem for education, and placed under the tuition of Gamaliel, the great doctor of the law, to be trained up in the knowledge thereof, under whom he studied, together with the apostle St. Paul. His original name given him at his circumcision was Joses, to which, after his conversion, the apostles added that of Barnabas, by which he is always called in the sacred writings: this, some authors are of opinion, was given him on the account of some eminent gifts bestowed upon him, being according to St. Luke's character of him, "a man full of faith, and the Holy Ghost." But if we consider the occasion of this name being imposed on him, and St. Luke's own interpretation thereof, that it signifies "the son of consolation," we shall with others, be led to conclude, that it was given him on the account of, and as an acknowledgment for his eminent and diffusive charity, and love to the brethren, being the first that sold his estate, for the public benefit and brought the money into the public fund; to be applied by the apostles, to the sustenance of poor christians.

He was not originally one of the apostolic college, nor do we find that he was stiled an apostle, till called by the Holy Ghost at Antioch, together with St. Paul, to go to preach the gospel to the gentiles.

When St. Paul, soon after his conversion, came to Jerusalem to visit the brethren; Barnabas, perceiving the cool and indifferent manner, in which his fellow student was received; introduced him into the society and fellowship of the apostles; and vouching for the reality of his change, and the sincerity of his conduct, dissipated those doubts, which his former behaviour had occasioned. When the apostles at Jerusalem, heard of the conversion of Antioch, they sent Barnabas to assist and confirm the Christians in that city, who was in all likelihood.

hood made choice of, both on the account of his being a complete master of the Greek tongue, the common language of Antioch, and being born at Cyprus, the Apostles thought it might be most agreeable to the first planters of the gospel in Antioch, who were most of them Cypriots, to have a fellow labourer of their own country sent among them. Where, upon his arrival, he with great joy, beheld the great progress of the gospel in that city; he therefore applied himself with the greatest diligence, to confirm and strengthen those who had already believed, and to preach the glad tidings, to all degrees of men: but finding the labour too great for himself alone, he went to Tarsus, in quest of his former companion St. Paul. whom he engaged to come and assist him at Antioch, where they laboured together for the space of a whole year, in the propagation of the gospel.

When the famine happened in Judea, A. D. 44. this Saint, together with St. Paul, was sent by the Christians there, with considerable contributions for the relief of the poor brethren in that city; when having discharged their trust, they returned again to Antioch, taking with them John, whose surname was Mark.

Shortly after their return to Antioch, our saint was by the Holy Ghost called to the apostleship, and together with St. Paul sent to preach the gospel to the gentiles, when after a solemn fasting and prayers for the success of their ministry; and having received the imposition of hands, from the brethren in that city, they departed from Antioch; and from this commission it was, that Barnabas obtained the name of an apostle. The apostles taking John Mark, with them, travelled thro' the greatest part of Asia Minor, preaching the gospel, and converting many to the faith of Christ. At Perga, in Pamphylia, Mark being grown weary of
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that itinerant course of life left them, and returned back to Jerusalem. At Iconium in Lycaonia, having miraculously cured a cripple, the people took them for gods, styling Barnabas, Jupiter, and Paul, Mercury, and would have done sacrifice to them as such, had they not restrained them ; though they afterwards stoned them. After three years spent in these travels, (the particulars of which have been already related, in the life of St. Paul, to which I refer the reader ;) having converted many to the faith, and prepared the Gentile world for the reception of Christ, and his religion, they returned again to Antioch.

About the year 48, a dispute arising at Antioch between the Jewish and the Gentile converts, concerning the indifference, or necessity, of christians observing the Mosaic rites and ceremonies ; Barnabas was joined with Paul, and sent to Jerusalem, to consult the rest of the apostles on this important subject, where they related to the council held there, how far God had been pleased to accept the Gentiles as well as the Jews ; upon which the matter was decided, and a decree made in favour of the Gospel liberty ; with a copy whereof, and letters from the council to the brethren, the two apostles returned to Antioch ; and having read their letters and the decree, they were received with a general joy and satisfaction, for that they were not confined to the Mosaic yoke, but allowed the liberty of that gospel.

Shortly after this, St. Peter being at Antioch, and temporizing with the Jewish converts, in regard to things clean and unclean, and the observation of the law of Moses, and separating himself from the Gentile converts, St. Barnabas followed his example, and was carried away with the stream of dissimulation ; for which, St. Paul, we may justly presume, rebuked him as well as Peter.

Some

Some time after, St. Paul proposing to his former colleague Barnabas to revisit the churches they had before planted, he readily consented to the proposal, but insisted on taking his nephew Mark with them, which St. Paul as strenuously opposed, urging his leaving them, in their former journey at Perga, as a proof of his weakness, whereupon the contest grew so high, each being determined to stick to his own resolution, and as neither of them would give way, after a joint labour, in the ministry, for several years, they parted ; upon which occasion, God did most eminently illustrate the wisdom of his providence, by making the frailties of two such eminent servants, instrumental to the benefit of the church, for though they separated from each other, yet neither of them forsook his ministry, and each from that time, employed their industry and zeal singly and apart, which till then had been united and confined to the same place ; for St. Paul taking Silas with him, visited the churches of Syria and Cilicia ; and St. Barnabas, with his nephew Mark, went to his own country Cyprus : by which means, a greater number were converted, and more provinces visited with the light of the gospel than otherwise would have been.

With respect to the future labours of this apostle, the sacred writings give us no account, and ecclesiastical writers differ, some affirming, that he went to Italy, and preached the gospel at Rome ; after which he sailed into Liguria, where he founded the bishoprick of Milan : others say, that from Cyprus he travelled to Alexandria, and returned to Judea ; while others insist, that he continued and spent the remaining part of his life in his native country of Cyprus, in preaching the gospel to his own countrymen ; and, indeed, if he ever went from thence, it is most certain, that he returned thither again ; for it is allowed,

on all hands, that he suffered martyrdom at Salamis, a city in that island, whither some Jews being come from Syria, who spiriting up the rest of their countrymen that were there, they set upon the apostle; as he was preaching in the synagogue, and having shut him up in a corner thereof, for that night, the next morning they brought him out, and after inflicting several tortures upon him, as beating him, and the like, at last they stoned him to death. His cousin Mark took up his body, and buried him in a cave near the city, where his remains are said to have been discovered, A. D. 485, with St. Matthew's gospel, written in Hebrew, lying upon his breast.

St. Barnabas was endued with great humility and charity, of immovable constancy, and invincible patience, thoroughly furnished with divine grace, and indefatigably diligent in preaching the gospel. He left one epistle behind him, which tho' sometimes read in Christian churches, yet was never admitted into the sacred canon. It was held in very great repute by the ancients, and frequently quoted by Clement of Alexandria. It was written seemingly for the instruction of the Jewish converts; and its chief design is to shew, that the law is abolished by the gospel, that legal ceremonies are useless, and that the incarnation and death of Jesus Christ was necessary: it contains also a very useful and excellent exhortation, couched under the notion of two ways, the one of light, the other of darkness; one under the conduct of the angels of God, the other under those of the devil. The way of light he makes a summary of the Christian's duty, that he may inherit eternal life. By the way of darkness he represents those sins and vices, which exclude men from the kingdom of heaven, and cast them down into hell: and concludes the whole with earnestly exhorting Christians, to live in such an hum-

humble and upright manner here, that they may enjoy everlasting happiness hereafter. The whole is written in a very allegorical style ; but by the labour of that excellent prelate, the late archbishop Wake, it is now rendered both entertaining and profitable to the English reader.

As to the time of this apostle's death, we have no certainty, but we may (I think) conclude, that it was not long after he had finished his epistle, which was A. D. 72. and for that reason I have placed his death in 73. He is commemorated by the church June 11 in a public feast. As he was not originally of the number of the apostles, I did not think proper to place him among them, according to time, but after the rest, as an appendix to their lives; thus having given a view of the sufferings and death of Christ, for the sake of mankind, and of the blessed apostles for the sake of the gospel ; I shall proceed to shew, the influence it had on the first ages, and that no torments were able to move the first Christians from their belief, that under the greatest difficulties and oppressed with the greatest storms of persecution ; yet not all the malice of earth or hell, could force one single christian to forego his faith. No arts could diminish the growth, or stop the progress of the gospel ; but in spite of all the efforts of both men and devils, the more they strove against it, the more it spread and prevailed, and grew stronger and shone brighter, by every persecution it underwent.

The end of the lives of the Apostles.

O F T H E

Martyrs and Persecutions,

I N T H E

First Age of the Church.

HAVING taken a view of the sufferings of the holy apostles, and seen how they for the sake of Christ endured the cross and sundry kinds of death; who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword; all of whom having obtained a good report, thro' faith are sat down on the right hand of the throne of God; we proceed now, to consider those holy men who were either cotemporaries with them, or lived immediately after them, and to shew, how they, following the examples of Christ and his apostles, for their steady adherence to the faith, had trials of cruel mockings, of bonds and imprisonments; how they out of weakness were made strong; others were tortured not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a glorious reward: they were stoned, were sawn asunder, were slain with the sword, of whom the world was not worthy.

It is but very few, of the names of the martyrs of this century, that have been handed down, and even of them, but little is known; the reader must not then expect any long account, but only a short detail of what is known, and is agreeable
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to the word of truth and matters of fact. The first of these that I shall present to his view is, Joseph, surnamed Barfabas.

JOSEPH surnamed BARSABAS.

HE was one of our Lords first disciples, and is by the antients reckoned one of the seventy disciples; some suppose that he was one of the brethren, or relations of our Lord, whom the gospel makes mention of: he was candidate for the apostleship together with Matthias, to fill the place of Judas the traitor; neither the gospel, nor ecclesiastical writings, make any farther mention of him; only from Papias we learn, that having been once obliged to drink poison, it had no effect upon him; according to our Lord's promise to those who believe in him. He continued during his whole life, preaching of the gospel, and, having suffered a great deal from the Jews; he at last died in Judea, where he obtained the crown of martyrdom, but the time, place and manner thereof is uncertain, and unknown.

ANANIAS of Damascus.

OF this holy man's curing of St. Paul of his blindness, wherewith he was afflicted from the radiance of that light which he beheld at his conversion, we have already related in the life of St. Paul; history gives us no particular accounts of him; and whether he was a layman, on an ecclesiastick, is much doubted; he is supposed to have been one of our Lords seventy disciples; to have

have been made bishop of Damascus, and to have obtained the crown of martyrdom in that city ; but the time and manner is no where related. However, over the place where he was buried, was a stately church built, which is now turned into a Turkish mosque.

ERASTUS the Chamberlain of Corinth.

HE was in all probability a native of Corinth, of which city he was the chamberlain, but being converted by St. Paul he resolved to pursue his fortune: upon which account he resigned his employment and followed that apostle, till his last voyage to Corinth in his way to Rome in his last journey thither, he is said to have been left by St. Paul in Macedonia; and made bishop of that Province and to have suffered martyrdom at Philippi. He was frequently employed by St. Paul in carrying of his messages and epistles to the churches.

ARISTARCHUS, the Macedonian.

HE was a native of Thessalonica, a convert and companion of St. Paul, and was with him at Ephesus, in the disturbance raised by Demetrius the silver-smith, in which he suffered several insults from the populace, and was a partaker of all the labours and dangers of St. Paul, during his stay in that
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city.

city. From Ephesus he accompanied the apostle to Greece, from Greece into Asia and Judea ; from whence he went with him to Rome, where he was beheaded by the command of Nero.

TROPHIMUS the Ephesian.

HE was another of St. Paul's converts, a gentile by religion, and an Ephesian by birth ; after his conversion he accompanied his master wherever he went ; and upon his account it was, that the Jews raised that disturbance in the temple against the apostle, the last time of his being at Jerusalem ; and would have killed him, had not Lysias the captain of the guard, come to his rescue, and taken him away by force. Trophimus then quitting Jerusalem, followed his master to Rome ; and staid with him during his confinement. After St. Paul obtained his liberty, some say, that Trophimus attended him to Spain, and passing through Gaul, the apostle made him bishop of that province, and left him there, at Arles. After having staid there about a year, he in all probability returned into Asia ; and joined his master, whom he either accompanied, or followed to Rome, where he was at the time of St. Paul's Death, and was shortly after himself beheaded at the command of Nero.

PHILEMON and APPIA, his Wife.

PHILEMON was a person of some distinction in the city of Colosse, in Phrygia : by whom, or at what time, he was converted to the faith is uncertain, but it was most likely by St. Paul, whilst he was at Ephesus, or some other place in Asia, for we do not find that he was ever at Colosse, till after the time of the conversion of Philemon, which must have been before he wrote to him in the behalf of his run away servant Onesimus; or it might be by Epaphras, St. Pauls disciple, whom he appointed his messenger from Rome to the church of Colosse : but from the apostle telling him in his epistle, that he owed his very self to him, it is most likely that he was converted and received the first instructions in the gospel from the apostles own hands. But be this as it will, it is certain, that after his conversion he became a fellow labourer in the gospel, converted his own house into an Oratory, for the Christians to meet and perform their devotions in, and his faith and charity was thought worthy of the great apostle of the Gentiles commendation : and when he himself came afterwards to Colosse, he honoured Philemon and his wife Appia, by taking up his abode at their house, during his continuance in that city ; and constituted his host Philemon bishop thereof, who by his extensive charity, as much edified that city, as by his preaching : till at the last, in the latter end of Nero's reign, and after the death of St. Paul, he and his wife both suffered Martyrdom, on a day dedicated to Diana, being both slain by the rage of popular fury: some of his family remained and flourished at Colosse, till the fifth Century.

VITALIS and VALERIA.

OF these Martyrs all that we can gather is, that Vitalis lived in the reign of Nero, and had a command in the Roman army, that he concealed his religion for some time, that he might be more serviceable to the Christians during the heat of the persecution; but on seeing one of them, named Urafinus, tremble at the approach of death, he made an open discovery of his own faith, and encouraged the suffering Christian, so successfully, that he laid down his life with courage and with joy, and Vitalis took care to bury his body; for which, and his declaration of his own faith, he was condemned to the rack, had his bones broke, and was buried alive.

After the death of her husband, Valeria his wife, quitted Rome, and was travelling towards Milan, but was stopped on the road, by some heathen Peasants, who were then celebrating a feast in honour to the heathen deities, who would have engaged her to join them in their superstitious rites, which she refusing to comply with, was murdered by them. They were both slain during the reign of Nero, but the particular year we have no account of.

T H E

Second general PERSECUTION

Under the

Emperor Domitian, began A. D. 95.

DURING the reigns of Vespasian and Titus, the two succeeding Emperors to Nero, the church enjoyed a respite from persecution, as it also did in the beginning of Domitian's; but at length he be-

gan to imitate his predecessor Nero, both in cruelties and hatred to the church of God; and to compleat his wickedness, in the beginning of this year he raised a general persecution against the church of Christ; occasioned partly by fear, lest the kingdom of Christ should subvert and overturn the Roman empire, and imagining that Christ must be an earthly Potentate, he endeavoured by fire and sword, and all kinds of death and torments, utterly to extinguish the very name and memory of Christianity: a second cause of this persecution was his hatred to all goodness, especially to the Christian religion, which maligned his false deities, and taught men to adore the only living and true God. For which reason, Satan the grand deceiver of mankind, did not fail to inspire the heathen priest with envy against the church, and the priests themselves perceiving, that as Christianity gained, they lost ground, therefore finding their craft in danger of being destroyed, Demetrius like, they instigated the rage of the Roman Emperors, and Idolatrous governors against it. For which purpose they raised many lies, false calumnies, and malicious slanders against the people of God: accusing the Christians with being enemies to the state, and to the Emperor, which accusation they grounded upon their refusing to give divine honour to the Emperor, or to pay adoration to his statue, which he had erected in the capitol, and commanded to be worshipped. Whatever crimes their malice could invent, or rash suspicion could surmise, they immediately imputed to the Christians, charging them with the most impious crimes, that they assembled in the dark where they used all promiscuous copulation, one with another, all filthy and beastly lust, and debauchery not to be named. That they killed their own children, delighted in murder and andromanducation, encouraging Pseudo witnesses against them, who for the sake of gain,

and in hopes of getting the possessions and goods of the Christians, were ready enough to accuse them of whatever these instruments of the devil, thought fit to lay to their charge: and that they should be sure not to escape, a law was made, "That if any Christian was brought before the magistrates, let the crime be for what it would, guilty or not guilty, he should not be discharged, unless he renounced his religion;" and that they might be the surer of their mark, they contrived to make the Christians their own accusers, by first swearing them to speak the truth, and then interrogating them, if they were Christians, or not, which thro' the regard they had for the sanctity of an Oath, they dared not deny; their confessions were deemed sufficient proof to proceed against them, by laws made on purpose for their destruction, and to condemn them to death.

Nor were these tyrants satisfied with barely putting them to death, but various arts of killing were invented, various new torments devised, to make them linger in death, and to augment their misery. Loathsome and tedious imprisonments, scourges, drawing, tearing of the nails and flesh off; stoning, burning in various manners; laying some on red hot plates of iron, roasting some, broiling others on large grid-irons, made for the purpose; impalements, racks, throwing them to be devoured by wild beasts kept and made hungry and fierce to devour them, tossing them on the horns of bulls, for their sport and pastime, frying them in iron chairs, and sawing them in sunder; and many other kinds of cruel deaths, as lingering as might be, to make their torments the more lasting and exquisite; to some indeed they were so merciful, as to strangle them in their dungeons, or to let the sword, the ax, or the gibbet, put an end to their life. Nor did their malice end in death, but even after death, their bodies were thrown in
heaps,

heaps, to be kept, or devoured by dogs, not suffering their friends to inter them. But notwithstanding all these persecutions, the church of God daily grew and encreased more and more ; the sufferings of these Christians, only encouraging others to embrace the faith, in hopes of sharing the reward of Godliness : and their patience in torment made their deaths less terrible to the beholders, and was a great motive to the increase of the gospel. Of which Justin martyr, an author of the 2d. Century, in his epistle to Trypho the Jew, speaking of the Christians, of whom himself was a very zealous one, and a great champion for the faith in Christ, writes thus. "None can terrify or move us from our faith in Christ, and it is daily seen, that when we are crucified, slain, cast to the wild beasts, or into the fire, or put to the greatest torments, yet we depart not from our faith, but the more cruelty is used against us, the more there are that come to piety, and faith in Christ ; for as men cut the branches of the vine to make them grow the better ; so the vine planted by God and Christ our Saviour, is his people. In this persecution many very eminent persons suffered, among whom were Antidas, in Pergamus, one of the seven churches of Asia, of St. John's erecting : and Dionysius the Areopagite, St. Paul convert, and the first bishop of Athens : Domitian not satisfied with destroying the heads of the church, fell also upon his own relations, particularly his cousin-German Flavius Clemens, whom he put to death for embracing Christianity, and banished his wife Domatilla, to the Island of Pandataria ; and would have put his neice Flavia to death by torture ; but her youth, beauty, tears and friends pleading for her, for once moved his compassion, and he changed her sentence into banishment to the island of Pontia.

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To recount the names and numbers of the several martyrs that suffered in this persecution, would be a task too arduous, and too tedious, for the present work ; since authors differ greatly, both as to their names and numbers ; let it then suffice, to say, that in this as in all other persecutions, the heads of the church were principally struck at ; smiting the shepherds that the sheep might be the easier scattered ; but by grace of God, Christians in those early days of the church, were enabled to teach and instruct one another, tho' their bishops, and other subordinate teachers were taken from them, by the violent flames of persecution. Some authors have told us that no less than 40,000, Christians received the crown of Martyrdom, in different parts of the empire, during this tyrants reign, which lasted near 16 years ; amongst whom where Cletus, or Anacletus, the second bishop of Rome, who succeeded St. Peter, and received martyrdom A. D. 92. after he had been bishop of Rome for 12 years. As Linus St. Paul's successor, and bishop of the Gentiles, in that city, had done before him in the reign of Titus, tho' most probably without that emperor's knowledge.

During this persecution it was, that St. John was cast into the caldron of burning oil, and by providence miraculously preserved, as see his life. Mark the first bishop of Atina in Latium, was struck into the head with Tenter-hooks ; and Felicula an illustrious woman in Rome, whose body was thrown into the common-sewer ; and Nicodemus, a Presbyter of the same city, was beaten to death. But the Almighty was at length pleased to put a stop to these cruelties, by the death of the emperor, who, after he had as it were deluged the earth with the blood of the Saints, was slain by his own servants, and his delight in murder,

der, finished by the murder of himself, in spite of all his boasted divinity.

Here we may observe from Tertullian, that Domitian had before his death greatly relaxed the persecution, on a nephew of St. Jude being brought before him, and giving him such an account of the nature of Christ's kingdom, as in a great measure abated his fears of a rival in the empire, the particulars whereof have been before related in the life of St. Jude.

DIONYSIUS the Areopagite.

A. D. 96,

THIS worthy Pagan magistrate was converted to the faith at Athens, by St. Paul ; as hath been already related ; he was bred at Athens in all the polite arts and sciences ; at five and twenty years of age, he went into Egypt, to perfect himself in the study of astronomy, where upon viewing that great eclipse which happened at our Saviour's crucifixion, he concluded that some great accident must be coming on the world. When he returned to Athens, he became one of the senators of that city ; the obtaining of which dignity proves him to have been a man of good morals, probity, and well qualified for the administration of publick justice ; all which good qualities were sanctified by his conversion and baptism, by St. Paul ; who deemed no one more capable of governing the church of Athens than this noble convert : authors are greatly divided, whether this is the Dionysius, the Tutelar saint of France or not ; some saying that he never was in France ; but that after exercising his episcopal jurisdiction for several years at Athens, after various sufferings for the faith

faith of Christ, he there received the reward and crown of martyrdom. Whilst those who are of opinion that Dionysius the Athenian, and Dionysius the first bishop of Paris are the same, tell us, that after he had governed the church at Athens for some years, and brought it to a flourishing state, he made a journey to Rome ; and Clemens the then bishop of Rome, recommended to him to go into Gaul, or France to preach the gospel ; that coming thither his labours were crowned with success, and that he fixed his abode, and suffered there ; however, both agree in this, that Dionysius the Areopagite was beheaded in the second general persecution, under Domitian ; and about the year 96. The first opinion seems to be the most probable ; and that he went not from Athens, but suffered in, or near that city ; and that the Parisian Denis, is many years younger than the Athenian.

TIMOTHY, the Disciple of St.
PAUL, and Bishop of Ephesus.
 A. D. 97.

TIMOTHY was born at Lystra in the province of Lycaonia, his father, whose name is unknown was a gentile : his mother Eunice a jewess ; who together with Lais, his grandmother, had embraced the christian religion ; which two holy women took a particular care of the education of young Timothy, and taught him the holy scriptures from his infancy. When St. Paul arrived in Lycaonia, he found him ready formed for the ministry, and in high esteem among the faithful, both at Lystra and Iconium ; and for that reason made choice of him, for a companion of his future
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labours; but being willing in indifferent matters, to accommodate himself to all mens tempers, he therefore obliged him to be circumcised; well knowing, what a prejudice the want of that rite would have been in the opinion and estimation of the Jews, who would by no means have listened to the ministry of one who had not received that mark of the covenant. This being performed, the apostle by the imposition of hands, ordained him to the ministerial office, and from that time made him his brother and companion in the apostleship, and his beloved scholar and son.

Timothy being thus ordained, left all to follow St. Paul, and by his fidelity and zeal, made the apostle ample amends for the loss of Barnabas, as appears from what St. Paul himself says of him to the Philippians, that he had found no one so truly united to him, both in heart and mind, as Timothy; in whom he experienced a sincere and disinterested concern for the salvation of mankind, whilst many sought their own interests more than the gain of Christ's kingdom; nor is this the only occasion that the apostle takes of commending him, and the many tender expressions of affection to him, when used by one so full of the love of Christ as St. Paul was, are of themselves sufficient to give us a just idea of his merit.

The first journey which Timothy made with St. Paul, was from Asia into Macedonia, where he had a considerable share in propogating the gospel with that apostle and Silas, going through that whole province, and carrying the light of the gospel quite to Beræa; and when the apostle, to avoid the fury of the Jews, was obliged to leave that place, and go to Achaia, he left Timothy behind him, who was less odious to them, that he might comfort and strengthen the converts in that city.

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When the apostle came to Athens, he sent for Timothy to come to him, where, being arrived, however dear his company might be to him, yet he dispatched him into Thessalonica, having heard of the afflictions and sufferings of the brethren in that place.

Timothy being arrived at Thessalonica, strengthened the brethren, and kept them steady against all the persecutions raised against them, and then returned to St. Paul, with the account of his success. He found him at Corinth with Silas, and after having joined them in the two epistles to the Thessalonians, as appears by all three of their names being prefixed to those epistles: he accompanied St. Paul, thro' his long journey from Corinth to Jerusalem, and thence to Ephesus.

From Ephesus he was sent by the apostle into Greece, together with Erastus, to acquaint the churches in those parts of St. Pauls design of visiting them, to prepare them for his reception, and to collect alms for the faithful at Jerusalem. Having a particular order to go also to Corinth, and to put the Corinthians in mind of the doctrines which the apostle had taught them. After having executed this commission, he went back into Asia, and rejoined St. Paul, whom he afterwards accompanied in all his journeys, and was with him at Jerusalem and at Rome.

While St. Paul was at Ephesus in the year 57, Timothy being about 30 years old, he constituted him bishop of that church, and going himself to Macedonia, left Timothy to govern his charge at Ephesus; giving him directions how to behave himself in his episcopal character; to oppose all false doctrine, regulate the prayers of his flock, to watch carefully over the faith and conduct of all committed to his care; and use the greatest caution in the choice of inferior ministers.

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Tho' St. Paul had fixed Ephesus, for the principal residence of Timothy, yet it is highly probable that he had the whole province of the lesser Asia under his inspection, and that Timothy was arch-bishop thereof, and had several bishops under him, which the apostles instructions to him relating to bishops seems to confirm.

That Timothy was very temperate and abstemious, we may learn from St. Paul's epistle to him wherein he blames his excessive moderation, and recommends to him the moderate use of wine, by which we may presume that Timothy had hitherto drank only water; but the apostle considering the weakness of his stomach, and the frequent infirmities to which he was subject, as well as the importance of his life to the service of the church, advised him in some measure to cherish his body for the benefit of Christianity.

In the year of 67, St. Paul, being then in his last imprisonment at Rome, wrote to him desiring him to come to him, wherein we may behold the words of a dying father, to a dear son, expressing a strong desire to see him before he left the world, and recommending to his care some points which nearly concerned the church. Whether Timothy received this epistle soon enough to see St. Paul or not, is not certainly known: if he did, we may safely conclude that he went to Rome, and was present with the apostle at his death.

After the death of St. Paul we have very little account of Timothy, and therefore can only say, that he returned to Ephesus, and continued to govern the church till the year 97; when the Pagans at Ephesus, who were great votaries of the goddess Diana, celebrating a festival called Catagigion, on the 22d, or 24th of January, in which they carried about the images of their Gods, and by being masked and carrying clubs, committed many insolencies and outrages; which Timothy

stood, in the way to oppose and reprove as an execrable custom; which so enraged the people, that falling upon him with clubs and stones, they left him for dead; but some of the Christians finding him breath, took him up, and lodged him without the gate of the city, where within two days he expired; after infinite labours and difficulties, in the cause of God and the faith. He was of that note and eminency in the church, that St. John styles him, "The angel of the church of Ephesus," and many have given him the title of an apostle; which however he might deserve, yet he was never called to that dignity.

NICOMEDES, Martyr.

HE was an eminent Christian at Rome, converted to the faith, as is most probable, by some of the apostles. He employed himself, during the time the persecution under Domitian raged in the service of the Christians, attending the martyrs in their imprisonment, and giving them all the comfort and assistance in his power; and generally found means of giving their bodies a decent burial in spite of all the malice and vigilance of their persecutors, who endeavoured to prevent it, by mixing and confounding their bodies with the most vile malefactors, mingling them so that they might not be known; for which pious offices he was apprehended, and whipped with rods till he expired under the hands of the executioners.

T H E

Third General Persecution,

Under the
Emperor T R A J A N began A. D. 100.

DURING the short reign of Nerva, the successor of Domitian, the church had enjoyed a respite from persecution, but when Trajan mounted the imperial throne, his zeal for Paganism, the antient religion of the empire, proved of great disservice to the gospel; for in the third year of this emperor, a more cruel persecution began, than either of the former; when contempt and shame were added to torment; it had been deemed no great dishonour to any one to suffer, or to be persecuted under Nero or Domitian, who abhorred all goodness, and were both of them monsters in impiety: but to be persecuted and hated by Trajan, who was applauded as one of the best of the emperors, and of the strictest justice; this, caused the Christians to be looked on as traytors and malefactors, against an emperor famed throughout the world, for his extraordinary justice and moderation.

Under the notion of holding illegal assemblies the Christians were severely prosecuted by governors and other officers; and in this persecution, which continued several years, with different degrees of severity, in many parts of the empire, great numbers fell by the rage of the popular fury, as well as by laws and processess. Of the martyrs that suffered in the beginning of this persecution;

we have the names of Cefarius a deacon of Terracina in Italy, and Zosimus of Pisidia in Asia; but the most noted of all, was St. Clement bishop of Rome, who was thrown into the sea with a millstone, some say an anchor about his neck.

In the third year of this persecution, Pliny the Roman governor in Pontus and Bithynia, seeing the sufferings of the Christians, and the vast numbers of them who were indicted by others, and pressing of themselves to execution, insomuch that to punish all who acknowledged themselves to be Christians, would be in a manner to lay waste his province; and in compassion to them, he thought it necessary to write to the emperor in their behalf, giving him an account of their innocent and harmless manner of living, wherein he tells him; that they were a people of honest and harmless conversation, and guilty of no crime against either the emperor or the state. "I, (says he,) have never been formerly present at the examination or trial of Christians, and therefore know not the nature of their crime, how far it is punishable, or how to proceed in these enquiries: and am greatly at a loss, whether regard ought to be had to difference in age; whether the weak and young are to be distinguished from the more strong and aged; whether any time should be allowed for repentance; and whether it might be of any advantage to him, who was once a christian, to recant his opinion; whether the name alone, without any other crime, ought to be punished: Wherefore when any of them have been brought before me, I have first demanded of them, whether they were Christians? upon their confession, I repeated the question, and threatened them with punishment; and if they persisted, I commanded them to be executed for their stubbornness and inflexible obstinacy. Those who were Roman citizens, I ordered to be transmitted to Rome. As the error con-

continued spreading, more cases occurred. A nameless libel was presented to me, containing the names of many ; some of whom denied themselves ever to have been Christians: whom, after having offered sacrifices, invoked the gods, and blasphemed the name of Christ, which, it is said; "no true Christian can be compelled to do," I dismissed them; others confessed themselves to be Christians, but immediately denied it; saying that they had indeed been Christians, "but had renounced it; some three, others many, and one twenty-five years since: all which paid reverence to your statue, the images of the Gods, and blasphemed Christ. They affirmed that the whole sum of that error was, that upon a certain day, they were used to meet together before sun rising, and sing an hymn to Christ. "As A GOD," and oblige themselves, by a solemn sacrament, not to commit any wickedness, whatever, after which they retired, and met again at a common meal, in which was nothing extraordinary or criminal; which meetings they had laid aside, after the publication of the edict, forbidding all unlawful assemblies. And that I might the better satisfy myself of the truth of this matter, I caused two maidens, called Deaconesses, to be examined upon the rack; but finding nothing in them, but only an immoderate superstition, I therefore ceased any farther process, and have sent to beg your advice, as the case seemed worthy of consultation, especially, considering that great numbers of persons of all ranks, ages and sexes, are in danger of being called in question; this superstition having overspread not only cities, but country Towns and villages; but yet seems possible to be cured, and numbers might be reclaimed, if there was time given for repentance. By this letter we may see, the rage and malice of the Pagans, and the innocence of the Christians, and that tho' the severity of the persecution might cause some to fall off and apostatize,

tize, yet the number was so great, that the governor knew not what to do with them. Trajan having received this letter, returned for answer and direction in this affair; "That he would not have the Christians sought after, nor any credit given to false libels of accusation against them without a name; but that, if any were brought before him and convicted, he should punish them; unless they would renounce their superstition, and sacrifice to the Gods," which answer, Tertullian calls, a sentence of confused necessity, he would not have them sought after, as innocent men, and yet would have them punished as guilty, sparing and punishing at the same time."

By this letter, the fury of the persecution was, in some measure taken off; and tho' the popular rage might in some places continue, yet the general force and rigour thereof was abated, and ceased, after having raged with great fury near five years.

CLEMENT, Bishop of Rome. A. D. 100.

THIS eminent father, was a Roman by birth, and converted to the faith by the apostles, and was so constant in his attendance on those evangelical labourers, so attentive to their doctrine, and active in assisting them in their ministry, that he was stiled their disciple and coadjutor. He was first instructed by St. Peter in the faith, and afterwards became one of the constant attendants on St. Paul, by whom he is mentioned in his epistle to the Philippians, among such as had laboured with him in the propagation of the gospel, and had their names written in the book of life. He

He was with St. Paul at Philippi, about the year 52, when the apostle preached in that city, by whom he was employed in the ministry, and shared his sufferings for the faith there, and at other places, of which we have no certain account.

A. D. 68. A schism arising in the church of Corinth, in which some turbulent persons attacked the clergy, and stirring up the laity against them, deposed some, whose behaviour was unexceptionable, and such as might justly have secured them from any such attack; this was the unhappy cause of much mischief among the Corinthians, some of whom, thro' weakness, began to doubt of the truth of the gospel, thro' the conduct of such as affected to pass for the most zealous patrons of it; while the infidels failed not to make their advantage thereof, and to asperse the whole church for the faults of a few; this occasioned Clement to write to them. In his epistle he reminds them of the happiness of that peace, which they formerly enjoyed; and represents to them the danger of their unhappy divisions, shewing the consequences thereof by many examples, and how displeasing they were in the sight of God; advises them to re-union and obedience to their proper pastors, and recommends the practice of many Christian graces and virtues, and the observation of a regular discipline. The whole is written with great simplicity, energy, a tender concern for the church of Christ, and with great zeal and charity. It is esteemed one of the most eminent pieces of antiquity, and was frequently read in the Christian churches, tho' never received into the sacred canon.

A. D. 92. Cletus, or Anacletus, being dead, Clement succeeded to the bishoprick of Rome, tho' several eminent writers affirm, that he was so before, and that he succeeded St. Paul as Bishop

shop of the Gentiles in that city, as Linus, and after him Anacletus had done St. Peter the apostle of the Jews; but a coalition being now formed, and the difference between Jew and Gentile ceasing, upon the death of Anacletus, Clement became sole bishop, and was the first (the Romanists say the third) bishop of Rome; which large province he managed with great prudence, and appointed notaries to enquire after, and faithfully record the acts of the Martyrs, who suffered in his province, and dispatched ministers to preach the gospel, where it was not yet known.

A. D. 98. Clement with patience and prudence, got thro' all the storms of Domitians reign; but in the first year of Trajans, he having converted several eminent persons to the faith, was for that banished, and condemned to dig in the Mines, in the Taurica Chersonesus; where in the midst of his afflictions he made many converts to the faith of Christ, which the emperor hearing of, caused several of them to be put to death. And in the same year, by a special command ordered Clement himself to be apprehended, and cast into the sea, with an Anchor fastened about his neck, a method of execution, used both by the Greeks and Romans. Thus died this illustrious person, Nov. 24. A. D. 100, about two years after his banishment; and somewhat above nine after his becoming sole bishop of Rome. His epistle, to the Corinthians, before mentioned, and a second epistle, or rather Homily, which contains a serious exhortation to piety, are both of them published in English, by that learned and most reverend prelate, the late arch-bishop Wake. As to any other pieces which may bear his name, they were certainly none of his, tho' some may be very Antient.

The End of the first Century.

The

The Second Century.

TH E Christian religion had by this time spread over most parts of Europe, Asia, and Africa; extending itself from the British Islands, to the farthest Indies; and the church was adorned with several great lights, and eminent apostolical men; among whom were, Simeon bishop of Jerusalem; Evaristus of Rome; Cerdo in Alexandria; Ignatius in Antioch; and many others. And tho' the church was on the one side, pestered by Heretics, and wounded on the other, by the rage of the present persecution, yet it flourished and encreased, standing firm as a rock, against the Tempest, and all the power of Hell; and gloriously triumphant, in the utmost purity and piety. In the 4th year of this Century it was, that Pliny wrote his famous epistle to the emperor, in behalf of the Christians, as before mentioned, which, tho' it abated something of the rigour, yet it did not wholly put a stop to the persecution. For Trajan, like his predecessors was jealous of the line of David, and the royal house of Judah; because of an antient and current tradition, that from thence should arise one who should become monarch of the world. He therefore ordered, that whosoever could be found of the house and lineage of David, without any other crime than that of his birth, should be put to death; imagining, thereby to destroy all the power of a competitor, either to himself, or his successors, in the Empire. In consequence whereof, Simeon the bishop of Jerusalem was accused, and put to death.

S I M E O N, Bishop of Jerusalem.

A. D. 107.

THIS holy man was a near relation to our blessed Lord ; being the son of Cleophas, or Alpheus, brother to Joseph the husband of the blessed virgin, and the reputed Father of Christ. His education was according to the strictest rules of the Jewish religion, he being of the order of the Rechabites. He was in all probability, first instructed in the gospel by Christ himself, and was one of the seventy disciples, in which station he continued till after the martyrdom of James the just, bishop of Jerusalem.

When the apostles left Jerusalem, to plant the faith in different parts of the world, it is most likely, that this father continued in that city, to assist his brother James, in his office. He was present, when that saint was martyred, and reproached the Jews with their cruelty, and was so high in their esteem, that, tho' they would not be diverted from their purpose of murdering the apostle, yet they did not resent the liberty he took of reproving them, as it might have been expected they would have done.

A. D. 62. Upon the death of that apostle, which happened in the year 62 the supply of his place was thought of so great concern to the church that the apostles and disciples, came from all parts to Jerusalem, to elect a successor ; and unanimously conferred that honour on Simeon, who on account of the nearness of his relation to our Lord ; and the assistance he had given to his brother James, they thought the fittest person to succeed him. He was now about 75 years of age, when he took first possession of the episcopal chair. How he managed the affairs of his province, but few particulars are handed down to us, but we may be sure that

that he met with many and great difficulties, as it fell in with the blackest period of the Jewish church.

Some few years after his election, the troubles began in Judæa ; which ended in the final destruction of that city and temple, and the dissolution of the Jewish œconomy ; and completed our Saviour's prophecies of that unhappy and ungrateful People.

A. D. 69. In the beginning of these troubles, the Christians, remembering our Lord's predictions and advice, that when they should see Jerusalem encompassed with armies, to provide for their own safety ; they therefore under the guidance of their bishop Simeon, left the city ; and as Epiphanius tells us, by the direction of an angel fled to Pella, a small town beyond Jordan ; where, as in a little Zoar, they dwelt, till the storm was over, and were so secured by the divine providence, that not one of them perished in the common ruin,

At what time they returned to Jerusalem, there is no absolute certainty, but the most probable account is, that it was about the year 72, and two or three years, after the devastation was ceased, when they settled again, in Judea, built them a few houses on the ruins of the city, and a little Oratory for their public worship on mount Sion, in the place, where the house had stood, in which the apostles assembled after our Lord's ascension, and where they received the miraculous gift of Tongues.

Here, Simeon acquitted himself in the administration of the affairs of his province, with great exactness and fidelity ; in which the almighty preserved him to a very great age ; when about the middle of Trajan's reign, he was called upon, to give the last testimony to his religion by his death. Both Vespasian and Domitian, had been very active

tive in searching out the descendants of the royal line of Judah, in hopes by their deaths to extinguish the royal family, and disarm the Jews of any pretence for revolting from the Romans. Simeon, tho' of that family, had hitherto escaped; but upon Trajan's reviving that enquiry, some of the Jews, who could not brook the zeal of this holy father, informed against him for being a Christian, and descended of the stock of David. This accusation was sufficient, Simeon was apprehended, and brought before Atticus the proconsul. His hatred to christianity and loyalty to his prince, easily prompted him to destroy, one whom he could not but look upon as an enemy to the Gods, and a rival to the emperor; he therefore commanded him to be racked for several days together, with the most exquisite torments; which the good old man endured, with such a steady composure of mind, and such invincible patience and courage, that the proconsul himself, and all others were surprized to see, and could not conceive, how a man of his years, and full of the infirmities which attend old age, could bear such severe trials: which might have led them to conclude that he was assisted by some supernatural and divine power, and have prevailed with them, to have been somewhat more merciful to him: But it had no effect on Atticus; who commanded him to be crucified, that he might die the same death as his cousin-german, (according to the flesh) had done.

He suffered in the 120th year of his age, A. D. 107. after having been bishop of Jerusalem, from the death of James, about 45 years; a longer period than twelve of his next successors could attain; the Almighty probably lengthening the life of this last apostolical man, that as a skilful pilot, he might guide the apostolic age, he being the last, who had been instructed in the gospel from the mouth of Christ himself; and who had personally con-

conversed with him, in the flesh. But the justice of God, shewed itself, in the fate of his accusers, several of whom were found to be of the same tribe and family as himself, and consequently equally guilty, of being descended from Judah, for which, they were equally obnoxious to the government; and commanded to be also executed, but without the advantage of having the profession of the true faith made a part of the charge against them.

IGNATIUS Bishop of Antioch, A. D. 107.

HISTORY affords us no certain account of this worthy bishop and martyr, any farther than that he was the very person whom, in his infancy, our Saviour took in his arms, and shewed to his disciples, as a pattern of innocence and humility, for which reason he is stiled, Theophorus (borne or carried by God.) He was, in his younger days, a disciple of St. John the evangelist, by whom he was carefully instructed in those Christian graces and virtues which rendered him afterwards famous in the church.

He was for his eminent parts and piety made bishop of Antioch, the metropolis of Syria, a city not more famous for being the oriental seat of the Roman Emperors, and their vice-roys, than it was for its early entertainment of the faith, and for giving the name of Christians, to the professors of the gospel of Christ. He was most probably constituted bishop, at first, of the Gentiles in that city, as Evodius had been before of the Jews; it being not uncommon in those cities where St. Peter and St. Paul, both, preached and

X

founded

founded a church, as the one was the apostle of the Jews, and the other of the Gentiles, to appoint each of them a successor ; the city being divided into two cætus, or assemblies, under their respective bishops ; such were Evodius and Ignatius, but the former dying about the year 70, when the distinction between Jew and Gentile was near ceasing, a coalition was formed of both cætus, under the surviving bishop of Ignatius.

We have but few particulars recorded of his government, only in general, that with great faithfulness and diligence he discharged his office for the space of near forty years, in very perilous and tempestuous times ; and no doubt but Domitian's persecution found employment for all his zeal and vigilance, and gave him an opportunity of displaying the office of a good pastor in the most conspicuous light, by his most earnest prayers for the removal of the persecution, and the peace of the church ; and, by his constant preaching and exhortations, his endeavours to establish the weaker Christians, lest they might be overborn with the storm. He always greatly rejoiced at the peace of the church, though in his own person he ardently wished for martyrdom, without which he thought he could not sufficiently express his love to Christ, which desire, he in the end obtained.

In January, 107, Trajan the emperor, having obtained a great victory over the Scythians and the Daci, came to Antioch, and entered that city with great triumph and rejoicings. Soon after his arrival, he began to enquire into the state of religion, which was always his first care ; and in gratitude to the heathen deities, to whom he ascribed the cause of his success, he resolved to force the christians to own their divinity. Imagining also, that this his zeal for their service, might engage them to favour his designs on the Par-
thians

thians. He therefore revived his inquisition against the Christians, accounting it a diminution to his former victories to be conquered by them. Upon which, this brave champion for the gospel, Ignatius, being in fear for his charge, the church of Antioch, to protect which, he fearlessly presented himself before the emperor, between whom there passed a formal and particular discourse.

Trajan admiring him, and asking, "How he durst transgress his laws?" The good man vindicated his own innocence, declaring "the power that God had given the Christians over evil spirits, that the gods of the Gentiles were no better than dæmons, there being but one supreme God, and his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, who, though crucified under Pilate, had destroyed the devil, and would ruin the whole empire of dæmons, and tread it under the feet of those, who have God in their hearts."

Upon this discourse he was cast into prison, where he was subjected to the most merciless torments, being cruelly scourged, and obliged to hold fire in his hands, while his sides were burned with papers dipped in oil, his feet set upon live coals, and his flesh torn with red hot pincers.

The martyr being invincible under all these torments, he emperor pronounced him incurably superstitious, and sentenced him to be carried in chains to Rome, and there made a prey to the wild beasts, a death reckoned by the Romans, among the chief of their punishments, and inflicted only upon the vilest malefactors, under which sort they ranked the Christians; who were so frequently treated in this manner, that upon every frivolous pretence, the outcry was (*Christianos ad leones*) "give the Christians to the lions!" The holy martyr rejoiced at this sentence, saying, "I
thank

thank thee, O Lord, that thou hast vouchsafed thus to honour me with thy love, and hast thought me worthy, with thy apostle Paul, to be bound with chains : " then chearfully embracing his chains, and fervently praying for his church, he resigned himself to his keepers, who were ten soldiers, appointed to attend him to his execution ; which was ordered to be at Rome, in hopes that the publicness thereof, might deter others from embracing Christianity ; or that so tedious a journey in the winter, might tire the old man and oblige him to deny his faith ; but whatever might be their designs therein, the divine providence made it a means of advancing the interest of the gospel.

Being accompanied by Philo and Agathopus, two eminent Christians, he was conducted on foot to Seleucia, where they went on ship-board ; and after a tedious voyage, arrived at Smyrna. Here he was allowed to go on shore, and made use of that liberty to pay a visit to Polycarp, bishop of that city, his old friend and fellow-pupil, under St. John ; who, seeing him in chains, was so far from being discouraged, that with great earnestness he pressed him to a final perseverance, while the martyr desired that he and his church would join in prayers to God with him for the accomplishment of his martyrdom.

The arrival of Ignatius at Smyrna being known to the neighbouring churches, the whole country repaired thither, especially the bishops and pastors of the Asian churches, to partake of his prayers, receive his benediction, and to encourage them in his perseverance, to his consummation : to requite whose kindness, and for their further instruction and establishment in the faith.

During his stay in this city, he wrote four epistles, to four several churches ; one to the Ephesians,

sians, "commending their bishop Onesimus for his singular charity, and exhorting them to live in perfect unity one with another, and obedience to their bishop, and others set over them in the church. His second, he directed to the Magnesians, who inhabited on the banks of the river Menander, much to the same purpose as the former. His third was, to the Trallians," whose unity and obedience he commends, and exhorts them to continue constant therein." And his last was to the Romans, "expressing his earnest desire to be with them, and to lay down his life, by martyrdom, as a testimony of his faith, desiring them by no means to interpose, and out of a mistaken tenderness for him, deprive him of the greatest happiness he could attain to by their unreasonable endeavouring to prevent his being exposed to the wild beasts in the amphitheatre. "His keepers, impatient at their stay at Smyrna, set sail for Troas, where they arrived in the month of September: here he was not a little rejoiced at hearing that the persecution had ceased in the church of Antioch, according to his constant prayers to God to release them.

Hither several of the churches sent messengers to visit and to salute him, and hence he dispatched three more epistles; the first to the Philadelphians; "Congratulating their unity, and exhorting them to avoid corrupt doctrines." The second to the Smyrnæns, whom he had lately left; "Admonishing them to avoid divisions, as the original of all evil, and to be obedient to their bishop, and the pastors of the church." And the third to his friend Polycarp, which was a private letter, wherein, "He lays down many excellent rules, and instructions for the behaviour of a bishop, as the head of the church; and desires him to call a synod, and to ordain a bishop, to be sent into Syria, where God had given peace to the church,

Shortly after, they sailed from Troas, and came to Neapolis in Macedonia, from whence they went by land to Philippi; where they were entertained by the Christians, with all imaginable courtesie. Hence going on foot thro' Macedonia and Epirus, they came to Epidamnum, a city of Dalmatia; now Durazzo; where again taking ship, they arrived at Rhegium in Italy; hence to Puteoli; or Puzzoli. From whence, if it might have been granted, Ignatius desired to have gone by land to Rome, that he might have traced the same way, St. Paul went thither; but a fair wind springing up, they sat sail again, and the day following arrived at the Roman port, in the mouth of the Tiber, a few miles from Rome; whither our holy martyr longed to arrive, as much desiring to be at the end of his race, as his wearied keepers at the end of their journey.

The Christians at Rome, being acquainted with his arrival, came to meet him on the road, and received him both with joy and sorrow; joy for his arrival among them, and sorrow for his approaching fate; but, when some of them intimated to him, "that possibly the people might be taken off, from desiring of his death," he expressed a pious indignation, and desired them, "to lay no rubs in his way, nor to give the least hindrance to him, as he was now hastning to the crown of glory."

He indeed long desired this end, as appears from his epistle to the Romans, wherein he says, "Let the fire, or the sword, or the cross; the assaults of wild beasts, the breaking of bones, cutting off limbs, yea all the torments the devil can invent come upon me; so I may but attain to be with Christ." As soon as he came to Rome, he was presented to the governor or præfect of the city; and whilst preparations were making for his Mar-

Martyrdom; he, and the Christians, who were with him, employed their time in devotion; the holy man, prayed both with them, and for them; heartily recommended the state of the church to our blessed Saviour's protection, earnestly soliciting heaven to put a stop to the persecution, and to bless all Christians, with true love and charity, one to another.

At the concluding scene of his life, that the execution might be more pompous, and more public, it was appointed to be on the day of the Saturnalia, a festival, on which they usually entertained the people with the bloody conflicts of the Gladiators, and with the encountering of wild beasts. Accordingly on the 20th of December, he was brought into the Amphitheatre, and the lions let loose upon him, whose roaring he heard with no farther alarm, than saying, "That now, as Gods own corn, he should be ground between the teeth of those beasts, and become pure bread for his heavenly master." When, as he had desired the bellies of wild beasts for his grave, so they quickly dispatched him, leaving only a few hard bones, which they could not devour.

Thus died the great Ignatius, in a very old age, A. D. 107, after he had been sole bishop of Antioch about, 37 years, in which he was succeeded by Heron, an eminent person who followed his example, in laying down his life for his faith. The few remaining bones of Ignatius, were taken up, by those who were the companions of his journey, and carried back to Antioch, where they were carefully interred, in a Coemetry without the city.

He was a person, in whose breast the true spirit of religion eminently dwelt; of moderate and mortified affections to the world; full of humility; laborious in propagating the gospel; a prudent, diligent and faithful pastor; and like the true shepherd.

herd his master, laid down his life for his flock ; esteeming his chains jewels, and his death glorious.

His genuine writings are only the seven fore-mentioned epistles, which were highly esteemed by the antients, and of which, Polycarp gives us this commendation, " That they contain instructions and exhortations to faith, and patience; and whatever else is necessary to edify us in the religion of Christ." These epistles are all published in English, by the late arch-bishop Wake ; all others that may have been attributed to this father, have been always looked upon as spurious.

ONESIMUS and BARSIMÆUS Bishops. A. D. 109.

IN this year historians place the martyrdom of Onesimus, who was stoned to death at Rome ; and also, that of Barsimæus, who was bishop of Edeffa in Mesopotamia. All the account we have of the first, is, that he was a native of Phrygia, and servant to Philemon of Colosse, whom he run away from and robbed ; but meeting with St. Paul at Rome, was by him converted to the faith of Christ, who sent him back to his master, and by letter obtained his pardon. Upon his return to his master, he gave him his freedom, and sent him again to St. Paul his spiritual father ; who employed him in several messages to the churches, and shortly after ordained him a deacon ; and he afterwards became Bishop of Ephesus, but some say of Beræa in Macedonia, and that he was placed there by St. Paul. Of the latter we have no particular account, but only his name.

During this reign of Trajan, there were many others suffered, of whom only the names are come down

down to posterity, as Phocas bishop of Pontus, who for refusing to sacrifice to Neptune, and persisting in his resolution, was thrown first into a burning lime-kiln, and being taken out, was afterwards put into a scalding bath, where he ended his life, in the cause of Christ; Sulpitius, Servilianus, Nereus and Achilleus, who all sealed the testimony of their faith with their lives at Rome; and Sagaris in Asia: Publius, bishop of Athens, in all likelihood in that city, though we have no account of the time when, place where, or manner how he suffered; but only that it was under Trajan; these and thousands more endured the fiery trial, and various kinds of cruel deaths; and yet, notwithstanding all this violent persecution, the church still increased more and more, even in this reign, which lasted near twenty years.

A. D. 117. After the death of Trajan, his nephew Adrian succeeded to the empire, a prince of a very amiable disposition, and of excellent qualifications, under whom, the Christians might have hoped to have enjoyed peace; but his bigotry to the religion of his ancestors, and Pagan superstition, in which he was educated; caused him, not only to renew, but to increase the persecution, which his predecessor had raised: and tho' he made no new laws against the Christians, yet he commanded the old ones, the vigour of which had in some measure subsided, to be put again into execution. Of the several martyrs that suffered in his reign, I shall now relate the particular account, of such as are worth notice, and then mention the rest, of whom we have nothing remarkable, handed down to these times.

SYMPHOROSA and her Sons.

A. D. 120.

SYMPHOROSA, having lost her husband Getulius in this persecution, was left the sorrowful mother of seven children; she in the first place, retired as it were from the world, that she might be able to educate her children, in such a manner, as might render them worthy of the father from whom they descended; leaving therefore her house at Tybur or Tivoli, she retired into the country, for greater privacy; but had not been long in her retreat, when Adrian, the emperor, who had a stately palace in that neighbourhood, purposed to dedicate it to the honour of the heathen deities; and accordingly, began the ceremony with sacrifices, to engage the oracle to declare the will of the gods on this occasion; when the oracle, or rather the priest, returned for answer, "That the deities of the empire could have no rest, so long as Symphorosa and her sons were so near them, and allowed to call upon the name of their god, but that they were inclined to favour the emperor, if they could be induced to sacrifice to, and to worship them."

This answer could not fail of its desired effect, on an emperor famed for his piety towards the heathen deities: and therefore in obedience to them, he commanded this pious woman and her sons to be brought before him. At first, he endeavoured by persuasion, to bring her to obedience to his commands; to which she replied, "that her husband and his brother Amantius, had both of them preferred death, rather than perform what he required of her, and that she was ready to follow their example." Upon which, the emperor told her angrily, "that if she did not immediately sacrifice

fice to the gods, she and her sons should be slain, to appease their incensed powers :” to which she heroically answered, “ your deities cannot receive such a sacrifice, and should you slay me for the sake of Christ, my God, those devils, whom you adore, will be the more miserably tormented.” This reply incensed him still more, and he immediately ordered her, to make her choice of death, or compliance with his orders : when without any hesitation, she told him “ that she desired nothing more, than to be united to her husband, and to follow the path which he before had trod.”

Adrian finding her thus resolved, ordered her to be carried to the temple of Hercules : where she was first cruelly scourged, and then hung up by the hair of her head, but the emperor finding that these torments and farther threatnings did but increase her resolution he ordered her to be thrown into the river with a large stone about her neck which was immediatly executed.

The next day he sent for this martyr’s sons before him, to whom he was very liberal in his promises, and as violent in his threats ; but finding them proof against both, and that their mother’s example had inspired them with courage and resolution to pass through the same fiery trial, as their parents had done before them, and to tread in their steps, he ordered seven high posts to be set up round the temple of Hercules, and each of the brothers to be tied to one of them, and drawn up by a pulley, and their limbs stretched till they were dislocated : and finding this to have no effect towards altering their resolution, he ordered them all to be dispatched, each a different way, when accordingly, Crescentius, the eldest, was stabbed in his throat : Julian, the second, in his breast ; Nemefius, the third, in the heart ; Primitius, the fourth, in the navil ; Justin, the fifth, in the back ;

back; Staſteus, the ſixth, in the ſide, and Eugenius, the youngeſt, was cut in ſunder. Their bodies were thrown into a large hole, dug near the place where they ſuffered, and there buried.

EUSTACHIUS, a Roman Captain, about the year, 120.

HE was an officer in the Roman army, and had been ſent by Trajan on an expedition; which having performed with ſucceſs, he was returning to Rome. Adrian for joy met him on his journey, intending to bring to the city in triumph, but would have had him by the way, ſacrifice to Apollo, for having obtained the victory: which, when the hero reſuſed, and could neither by perſuaſions nor threats be brought to comply; he ordered him to be taken priſoner, and carried to Rome, where he ſuffered for the ſake of Chriſt; and ſo great was the emperor's rage againſt him, that, together with him, he condemned his wife, Theopiſta, and his two ſons, Agapetus and Theopiſtus, who all three ſuffered together with him.

FAUSTINUS and JOVITA Citizens of Breſſia. A. D. 121.

THESE two worthy martyrs, brothers by nature, as well as in faith and in death, were both, on the account of their religion, condemned to

to suffer ; which was executed with the aggravation of many cruel torments being exercised on their bodies, which one Calocerius beholding, and seeing the wonderful patience with which they endured the torture, he, from the light of nature, rightly concluded, that they must be endued with some supernatural and divine power, which supported them under such excruciating torments, and therefore cried out, “ Great is the God of the Christians ! ” upon which he also was apprehended, and made partaker of the same fate and honour with them.

SERAPIA and SABINA,
Martyrs. A. D. 125. and 126.

SERAPIA was a native of Antioch in Syria, where she was educated in the principles of the Christian religion ; while she was but young, she went into Italy, where she providentially fell into company with Sabina, a widow lady, the relict of an officer of some distinction in Vespasian's army ; upon whom, by her grave discourses, and amiable carriage, she gained such a good effect, that she converted her to Christianity : when she retired with her to a small town, called Vendina, where she employed herself in acts of charity and devotion, and continued in peace and quietness for some time ; till the persecution under Adrain, after he had been initiated into the Eleusynian mysteries, caused great trouble to the Christians : when Berillus, the governor of that part of the country, knowing that Sabina, and her whole family were Christians ; he sent an order to her to bring them all before him, for which Sa-

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bina

bina sent an apology, and desired to be excused, declaring, that not one of her family should have her consent for leaving her house.

Serapia apprehending what might be the consequence of exasperating the magistrate, desired that she might be admitted to go alone, hoping that God would not forsake her in the day of trial. Sabina, sensible of the danger to which such an act would expose her, endeavoured to dissuade her from it; but finding that she could not prevail, she resolved to go along with her. Berillus, when they appeared before him, had too great a regard to that lady's rank, to use her roughly at her first appearance, and therefore with a pretended concern told her, that he was surprised that a lady of her rank and quality should so far demean herself as to embrace Christianity at the suggestion of a vile witch: (a title he thought proper to bestow on Serapia:) to which the lady answered, that she heartily wished she could see him in the power of that witch, who would teach him to renounce his idolatry, and acknowledge the true God. The governor, after some farther discourse, permitted them, at this time, to return home.

Three days after this, the governor sent his officers to seize Serapia, and bring her before him for her trial. Sabina, alarmed at this, went with her, and used all manner of entreaties in her favour: but finding Berillus deaf to all she could say, she returned home, full of sorrow and anxiety.

The judge then proceeded to let Serapia know, he expected she should sacrifice to the gods of the empire: to which she replied, that her religion would not allow her to adore such false divinities; declaring, that she worshipped God in her heart; and her body, as long as she kept that
pure

pure and undefiled, was the temple of the living God, who dwelleth not in temples made with hands, but in the hearts of the faithful and undefiled: whereupon the governor asked her, whether if her body was violated, it would cease to be the temple of her God; to which she answered in the affirmative; and, at the same time, denounced a curse against any who should attempt such violation.

But the governor, not in the least affected by her threats, ordered her to be carried to a common brothel, and there put into the hands of two infamous wretches, to be used as they should think fitting: but the holy virgin offering up her prayers to God for her preservation, obtained her petition; and we are told, that when the two ravishers entered the room, they fell into a swoon, and did not come to themselves, till the whole place was convinced that her prayers were heard, and that she was preserved. But this the heathens imputed to magic, and the governor very gravely desired her to make a discovery of her art. To which she answered, that she detested all such charms, which proceeded only from the devil; but her preservation was from God. The governor then repeated his solicitations to her, to sacrifice to the Pagan deities, letting her know in plain terms, that if she refused, her life should pay for her disobedience. Her answer was, that she would never adore devils: upon which, Berrillus ordered a lighted torch to be held to her side, assuring her, that nothing but her compliance with his commands, should save her life. To which she replied, she was assuredly convinced, that nothing could secure her life, but refusing so detestable an act. Whereupon finding he could not prevail nothing, and that she persisted in her faith, he delivered her to the executioners, who

most cruelly scourged and tortured her ; but finding her an over-match for all their torments, she was condemned to lose her head, which put an end to her sufferings, and the pious Sabina took care of her body, and gave it a decent burial.

The death of her tutoress and companion was so far from discouraging Sabina, that it increased her confidence in Christ Jesus, and inspired her with a more lively faith and reliance on her Redeemer, while Berillus, out of respect to the person and quality of Sabina, had no inclination to proceed against her ; but Elpidius, who either succeeded Berillus, or had a jurisdiction independent of him, did not prove so favourable to her. She was apprehended by his order, and treated in a manner far beneath her rank ; he asked her, how she could so far forget herself, as to embrace the religion of the Christians, whose life was no better than death. Sabina answered, that she returned thanks to Jesus Christ, her Lord, who, by means of Serapia, had delivered her from the power of devils. This declaration, and some other words to the same effect, so provoked the magistrate, that he swore by all the gods, if she did not sacrifice to them, he would revenge the affront by her death. And after trying various methods, both of persuasion and of torture, to bring her to comply with his proposal ; and all proving ineffectual, he condemned her to be beheaded, and her goods confiscated. Her historian informs us, that she suffered on the same day as Serapia, but in the following year.

QUADRATUS, Bishop of Athens.

A. D. 137.

OF the birth and parentage of this holy man, history has left us no particular account ; but as his residence was at Athens, so we may conclude him to have been born there ; as nature had given him many excellent parts, so this seat of literature was of great advantage to his education : the antients affirming that he was a man of learning and trained up in the most useful parts of Philosophy.

He received his instructions in Christianity from the apostles themselves, more particularly from St. John for which reason Eusebus reckons him together with Ignatius, Polycarp, and some others, in the first rank among the apostles successors.

A. D. 118. He was chosen bishop of Athens, in the room of Publius, thought to be the same with the governor of Melita, whom St. Paul converted when he was ship-wrecked, on that Island, who had succeeded Dionysius the Arcopagite in that province. After the Martyrdom of Publius, and the persecution attending it, the people were in general scattered, their solemn and public assemblies deserted, their zeal grown cold, their manners corrupted, and themselves reduced as it were to an apostacy from Christianity. This was the state of the church of Athens, when Quadratus was appointed bishop, and undertook the care of it he applied himself with a fervent zeal to revive the antient order and discipline of religion among them, and to raise their faith and fervor into a holy flame. He preached the word with great diligence, and enlarged his people by daily converts, and in a little time reduced his church to so excellent a form, that Origen who lived but a few years after him, instances the church of Athens

to shew the glory of Christianity, in its excellent effects above all other religions in the World.

Quadratus was well qualified for this extraordinary work by being endued with several supernatural endowments, as a spirit of prophecy, speaking extempore upon emergent occasions, and of expounding difficult texts of Scripture : as Eusebius informs us, affirming that as he was cotemporary with Philips virgin daughters, so like them he had the gift of prophecy. And Menæon tells us, he had such a power of miracles, that by his prayers, he ruined the heathen Temples, thereby confounding the infidels, and mightily encreased Christianity.

But now, under Adrian, after a short tranquillity in the latter end of Trajan's reign, there arose a violent persecuton against the church ; for tho', according to Tertullian, Adrian himself, published no particular edict against the Chrstians, yet as the acts of Trajan were unrepealed, there wanted not instruments to put them in force ; especially as they saw it was pleasing to the Emperor, whose aversion to the Christians they were well acquainted with ; for whatever good qualities he might possess, yet his cruelty towards the Christian religion, and his bigotry to Paganism sullied all.

Adrian being a great admirer of the Grecian learning and philosophy, about the 7th year of his reign, A. D. 124, came to Athens, where he was initiated in the Eleusinian rites, which being esteemed the most sacred ones of the Gentile world, were emphatically called the mysteries. Here he continued the whole winter, and his superstitious zeal for Paganism, was deemed a sufficient warrant, for active zealots to oppress the Christians ; upon which the persecution growing fierce, several undertook to remonstrate, and to declare their case to the Emperor, among whom was the learned Aristides a Christian Philosopher.

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At this time too, Quadratus addressed the Emperor in an excellent apology, defending the Christian religion, from the reproaches of its enemies, pleading particularly our Saviour's miracles, "The work's (says he) of Christ were always conspicuous, because true; those who were cured, and raised from the dead by him, openly appeared and were seen of all men, and that not only while he conversed on the earth, but long after: yea, (he adds) some of them survived even to our time.

About the same time, Granian the proconsul of Asia, wrote to the Emperor, representing the cruelty of putting the Christians to death, merely to gratify the clamours of the people. This, together with the apologies of Quadratus and Aristides, abated something of the Emperors fury: and that some moderation might be shewed to them, he wrote to the governors of the several provinces, requiring that malicious and fraudulent informers should be discouraged, that all the causes against Christians, should be fairly tried, and that, if any accusation appeared to proceed from malice and spite, their accusers should be severely punished.

This was the state of the church at this time; as to Quadratus, he had before been forced thro' the violence of his persecutors to leave his charge at Athens, whence he went and preached the gospel at Magnesia, a city of Ionia, in Asia minor, where he suffered Martyrdom about the end of Adrian's reign, being first tormented with various punishments. He was buried at Magnesia, which rendered that city as memorable for the death of this Martyr, as it before had been for that of Themistocles the famous Athenian general.

Besides these, there were many others put to divers torments, and several cruel kinds of death; some few of whom we know only by name, historians having handed down nothing remarkable or worthy

thy of notice concerning them : among these are Alexander and Sixtus, both successive bishops of Rome, who suffered at that city ; Eventius, and Theodorus, two deacons ; Hermes, and Quinirus, both of them Roman citizens ; Zeno, a nobleman of Rome, and ten thousand more are said to have been crucified on Mount Ararat, crowned with thorns, and spears thrust into their sides, in derision of our blessed Lord ; the chief of whom we are told were, Achaicus, Heliades, Theodorus. And Carcerius Eleutherius, bishop of Apulia, together with his mother Anthia, was martyred in his own city : as were Justus and Pastor, two brethren in Spain ; and Sophia a widow, and her three children ; with many more in all parts of the empire, of whom we have no account.

A. D. 138. Adrian dying this year, he was succeeded by Antoninus, surnamed Pius, one of the most excellent princes of the world for virtue and munificence, who had all the qualifications necessary to render a prince amiable to his people, upon which account he acquired the title of " Pater Virtutum," The father of virtues.

Under his mild and generous government, the Christians enjoyed a happy tranquility and great prosperity ; tho' the heathens who generally ascribed all public calamities to them, could not want opportunities and pretences to afflict them ; so that even this excellent reign was not wholly without martyrs ; particularly Telesphorus, bishop of Rome, who suffered in the first year thereof after he had sat 11 years in the chair ; but in what manner he received the crown of martyrdom is wholly uncertain ; all that we know of the matter, is that it happened A. D. 139.

A. D. 150. About this time, and in the twelfth year of Antoninus ; the christians began to be more severely treated by the Pagans, than they had
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of late been, for though the emperor himself was mild and generous, and put out no edicts against them; yet there wanted not those who traduced and defamed them; as a wicked and barbarous people, scandalous and abominable in their nocturnal assemblies, for which they were frequently prosecuted by the governors in the several provinces, and by virtue of particular edicts of former emperors, and the general standing laws of the empire, severely punished, and some put to death.

To vindicate them from these aspersions, and to mitigate the severities now used against them, the famous Justin published his apology, which he inscribed to the emperor, of which we shall have occasion to speak hereafter. This had so happy an effect on Antoninus, that he published an imperial decree, directed to the common assembly of Asia, by which he ratifies and confirms the former edict of Adrian in their favour, forbids them to be any farther prosecuted, unless for matters against the state, and ordains that if any of them should be indicted merely because he was a Christian, he should be discharged, though acknowledged to be a Christian, and his accuser be punished. From which time, the church enjoyed a perfect peace for the space of ten years, till the death of Antoninus Pius.

T H E

Fourth general Persecution,

Under the
Emperor MARCUS - AURE-
LIUS-ANTONINUS-PHI-
LOSOPHUS. Began A. D. 162.

THIS emperor, though a virtuous and worthy heathen, and as such a wise and good governor, let his zeal for the Pagan rites arise to the highest degree of superstition; he having been educated in the Salian college, and in imitation of his ancestor Numa Pompilius, gone through all the offices in his own person: this proved a great detriment to the Christians; for though he began his reign with great happiness and prosperity, and governed his people with justice and moderation, yet the very first year thereof, was sullied with the persecution of Christianity; which at different places, with several intermissions, and different degrees of severity, continued the greatest part of his reign. And tho' he made no new edicts against the christians, yet he repealed his predecessors decree in their favour, and encouraged his officers to put the former laws in execution against them, especially those which prohibited all religions not approved of by the senate. And now, no endeavours were omitted, to cause the Christians to lose their reputations as well as their lives; they caused their slaves and dependants to be tortured, to make them accuse them of secret crimes and enormities, especially in their

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religious offices ; while the innocent christians were forbid even to justifie themselves, and the world to read their apologies ; so that many suffered by means of insuperable prejudices,

In the first year of this persecution, we find no mention made of any particular martyr, except a religious woman called Glycerie, who, we are told suffered at Heraclea in Thrace, under the governor Sabinus.

A. D. 163. This year was noted for the martyrdom of many worthy Christians, among whom were Felicitas and her Sons.

FELICITAS and her seven Sons, Martyrs. A. D. 163.

FELICITAS was a Roman lady, of illustrious birth and virtue, and of true christian fortitude and affection for her children : she was a widow, and when she was called on to give testimony to her faith, had seven sons ; she had educated them in so religious a manner, that it was easy to see that they were formed for heaven, rather than for earth ; and answered their mother's hopes so well, that we are informed, she wished to see them glorify God by their martyrdom. Her prayers were heard ; for as the empire at this time had been troubled with earthquakes, famine, war, and inundation ; the idolatrous priests, highly incensed against the christians and their religion ; and more especially against Felicitas and her family, represented to the bigoted emperor that they were the cause of all the troubles, and that the angry gods would not be appeased, unless she and her sons were obliged to change their opinions, and to adore them. This charge was sufficient, Antoninus

nus immediately ordered them to be seized, and gave orders to Publius governor of Rome to see that the wrath of the gods was appeased, either by their change of their religion, or death. That magistrate began first with the lady, imagining if he could gain her, her example would influence her sons, or that the tenderness of a mother would work powerfully in her, and bring her to any terms, for the safety of her children. Wherefore the day before their trial was to come on, he sent for Felicitas, and endeavoured to engage her compliance by civil speeches, and a feigned concern for what her refusal of the emperors offer and his proposals, might bring on her; but finding his persuasions were in vain, he changed his language, and in an angry tone let her know, that she must obey or die. Whereupon unmoved with the fear of death, she told him, she hoped that the Holy Ghost would not suffer her to be overcome by the devil. For continued she, "if I survive this trial of my constancy, I shall be victorious over his attempts; but shall conquer still more gloriously, if I die by your hands." Publius surprised at her resolution, endeavoured again to soften her into a compliance, by begging her to consider the value of her Children's life, if she had no regard for her own; to this she replied, "that they would certainly live, if they persevered in the worship of the true God and an abhorrence of Idolatry; but the crime to which they were solicited would assuredly bring upon them eternal death;" this conference was held at the governors house privately, but being to no purpose, he dismissed them.

The next day, the governor took his seat in the public court, and ordered this virtuous lady, and her sons to be brought before him: at their appearance he spake to the heroic mother, in the hearing of the young men, telling her, that if she was then as indifferent to life, as she was the day before, she ought at the least, to have some compassion on
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her Children, whose youth and rank promised that they might become serviceable to the public wealth. To which she answered, that what he urged as a mark of her affection, was the greatest proof, she could give of a want of real concern for their good; and that the tenderness and compassion he advised, would give her the title of the cruelest of mothers; and then turning to her children, she exhorted them, to cast their eyes on heaven, where the Lord Jesus Christ waited to receive them; to fight boldly in the defence of their Souls, to maintain their integrity, and to stand fast in the faith.

Publius could not bear to hear her talk thus; ordered her, to be struck on the face, and at the same time reproving her boldness, to talk so before him, and daring to recommend to her children, disobedience to their sovereign.

He then set her aside, and proceeded to the examination of the young men; beginning with Januarius, the eldest, whom he tempted with large promises of reward, and immediate preferment in the state, if he would comply with his demands; but severe menaces of the most cruel and torments, if he, refused. The young man answering, told him, that all his offers, were lost upon him, and that he hoped God would give him wisdom to despise the one, and courage to conquer the other. Publius resenting this reply as an affront, ordered him to be whipt, and thrown into prison. Felix the 2d. was then called, who following his brothers examples met with the same fate. Philip the 3d was next brought to the Bar, and told that it was the Emperor's order, that he should sacrifice to the God of the Empire. To which he replied, that those Gods, were not Gods, but empty Idols, void of all sense. Publius was now able to form a judgment of the disposition of the other four, whom he might well suppose to have the same principles.

and resolution, as they had been all instructed by the same person; yet he flattered himself that he might be able to prevail on their youth, but upon trial found himself mistaken, and that they were as inflexible as their elder brothers had been. He took no small pains with Silvanus the 4th son to persuade or force him to comply, and to own that his mother had given him bad counsel: but the young man could by no means be brought to make so unjust a reflection on that holy woman. The governor finding him resolved to adhere to her instructions, told him, That the emperor's commands ought to be obeyed before his mother's, and that he might force him thereto by severe punishments. Silvanus answered, That a desire of acquitting himself of his duty towards God, was his only motive for disobeying the commands of men; and that he had much more to fear from an angry God than from all the punishments that his prince could inflict. The remaining three, whose names were Alexander, Vitalis and Martial, were then brought to the governor, who all three adhered to the same faith with the same intrepidity and steadiness. Upon which they were all committed to prison till the emperor's pleasure should be known.

Publius took the first opportunity of laying their trial before the emperor; who immediately ordered them all to be put to death, and they were accordingly all executed. Januarius the first, after being severely scourged with rods was pressed to death with weights; Felix and Philip had their brains beat out with clubs; Silvanus was cast headlong down from a precipice and had his neck broke; Alexander, Vitalis and Martial were all three beheaded: and last of all their mother shared the same fate with her three youngest sons, and was beheaded with the same sword. Gregory says in her commendation, that she enjoyed the glory of a double martyrdom; suffering first in the person of her sons and then in her own, and adds in

her commendation that she was as much afraid of leaving her children behind her in the world, as the generality of parents are of surviving them.

A. D. 96. This year the persecution grew hotter, and raged fiercer, than it had hitherto done ; especially at Smyrna, as appears from an epistle written from the brethren of that church, to the Christians in Pontus ; which gives a lively account of the martyrdom of several Christians, but more especially of the renowned Polycarp their bishop : and tells us, that all men were surprised at that greatness of mind, admirable patience, and sincere love to Christ, which appeared in the Martyrs ; who, when their bodies were so torn with whips and scourges, that the inmost veins and arteries were laid open they endured all without a sigh or groan, a plain evidence that they were supported by a divine power : those who were condemned to the wild beasts, were kept long in prison, and suffered many cruel torments ; being obliged to lye upon sharp spikes, and nails, placed under their bodies, or sharp shells and stones set on edge ; that, if it were possible, the length of their sufferings might force them to deny Christ. They all persevered to the last, even in the presence of the wild beasts. Among whom was Germanicus, a young man and an eminent Christian ; who being led to the wild beasts, when the proconsul of Asia, persuaded him to consider his youth and to spare himself from death ; he courageously pulled the wild beast to him ; and provoked it to devour him ; that he might be the sooner delivered from an unjust and wicked world ; and by that means, by his patience, and constancy, strengthened those who feared. Upon which the multitude of spectators beholding the invincible courage of the Christians cried out, “ Destroy the impious ! Let Polycarp be fought for !

POLYCARP, Bishop of Smyrna, A. D. 166.

POLYCARP has been always justly esteemed, one of the most eminent of the fathers ; he was, it is most likely, a native of Smyrna, of which he was bishop ; he was as the Greek Menæon tells us, educated at the charge of a certain noble matron ; and became a disciple of St. John the evangelist, very young, some say not above 11 years of age, and was instructed also by several other of the apostles, being familiarly acquainted with many who had seen our Saviour upon earth. He was constituted bishop of Smyrna by St. John, A. D. 82, which was several years before the banishment of that apostle to Patmos, and it is no small commendation of this father, what the apostle speaks to his praise, in his book of the Revelations, Chap. 2. And a farther argument of his great judgment, and his zeal for the faith, is that the holy martyr Ignatius, recommended his church at Antioch to his peculiar care for a successor, as as he was upon his journey to Rome to suffer there.

Indeed he had occasion for a large stock of patience, zeal and prudence, for governing of this church, while it was on the one hand attacked by Infidels and Pagans, and on the other by false brethren, and false apostles those worst enemies to the gospel. After the loss of his great friend and support, St. John, he endeavoured to keep his memory alive, both in his sermons and his conduct, in which he succeeded so well, that as Eusebius reports, the people of Smyrna still seemed to hear and see, that great founder of the Asiatic churches, as it were still present, in the words and actions of their prelate.

About

About the year 108, and some little time after the death of Ignatius, at the request of the Philippians, he collected together the seven epistles of that martyr; and sent them to Philippi with an excellent epistle of his own, highly valued by all the antients. In this epistle, "he first congratulates the Christians at Philippi, for receiving the imprisoned saints as they ought; whose chains he calls the crowns of God's elect; he then extols their piety, exhorting them to continue and increase therein; laying down many excellent rules and instructions for the same; treats of the reality of our Lord's incarnation and death, condemning all such as disbelieved the resurrection and a future judgment, as the first born of Satan. Modestly expresses his unfitness to instruct, them who had learned from St. Paul, and acknowledges his deficiency in the knowledge of several things contained in the holy scriptures." This he sent by a christian whose name was Cresens.

A. D. 157. After his collecting the epistles of Ignatius, and sending them to the Philippians, we have no particular account of Polycarp; we may therefore conclude, that during this interval, of near half a century, the church of Smyrna enjoyed peace; but in this year the Quartodociman dispute, between the Eastern and the Western churches concerning the keeping of Easter broke out. The churches of Asia keeping that feast, on the fourteenth day of the moon, after the vernal equinox, the day on which the Jews kept their passover, let it fall on what day of the week it would; for which they alledged the practice of the apostles St. John and St. Philip, as their president. The Western churches did not observe it till the Sunday following, being the day of the resurrection, the true Christian passover.

This difference, though it caused some disorder, yet it made no division in the church ; however, to extinguish this fire, before it came to too great an height, Polycarp undertook a journey to Rome, to settle this point with Anicetus, then bishop of that see. As each of them pleaded the custom of the apostles for their warrant, so neither could be prevailed on to quit their opinion and practice in this point.

But notwithstanding this, and some lesser differences, which they could not reconcile to each other ; yet the two prelates amicably agreed in charity with each other, well knowing that the vitals of religion lay not in such external rites, in token whereof they communicated together in the holy sacrament ; and Anicetus, to shew his respect to Polycarp, admitted him to consecrate the elements in his own church ; after which they parted amicably ; and though each retained his own opinion, yet both retained the peace and communion of the church.

During Polycarp's stay in Rome, he set himself principally to convince gainsayers, testifying the truth of those doctrines which he had received from the apostles, and recovered many to the truth who had been corrupted with the pernicious heresies of Marcion and Valentinus, who affirmed, that there were two Gods, one good, and the other evil, &c. As he was in Rome one day, happening to meet with Marcion, and taking no notice of him, the heretic called out, " Polycarp, own us : " to which Polycarp, with a just indignation, replied : " I own thee to be the first-born of Satan." Polycarp's pious mind was so heated with zeal and abhorrence of the poisonous principles, which, even in these early days, corrupted the faith, that whenever he heard any thing of that nature, he used immediately to stop his ears, and

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to cry out, " Good God, to what times hast thou reserved me, that I should hear such things !" and immediately quitted the place. So zealous was this good man for the kingdom of Christ, that he made it the whole business of his life to propagate the gospel throughout the world, sending out missionaries to preach the same in several places, particularly into France; the chief of whom were Pothinus, and Irenæus, both successive bishops of Lyons, in the year 166.

These are all the remarkable passages which we have of this devout man, till the persecution under Antoninus Philosophus, broke out at Smyrna, which brought him again upon the stage this year, when the Pagans, enraged at the resolution and invincible courage, which Germanicus shewed in his martyrdom, raised a tumult, and required Polycarp to be apprehended and condemned.

The good bishop hearing he was sought for, was not in the least daunted, but resolved in his own mind, to stand the shock ; but his friends, knowing of what great service his life was of to the church, if it might be preserved, persuaded him to retire out of the city to a neighbouring village, where, with a few companions, he continued day and night in prayer for the peace and safety of the church. Three days before he was apprehended, as he was in prayer in his bed, he fell into a slumber, or kind of a trance, and thought he saw his pillow under his head on fire, which he told his friends, and interpreted as a presage, "that he should be burnt for the cause of Christ." And now, being narrowly sought for, he retired to another village, whither also his persecutors followed, and seizing upon two boys, forced one of them, by beating him, to discover where he was. Polycarp had sufficient notice hereof, and might have escaped to another place, but refused, saying, " the will of the Lord be done." Understanding that

that his persecutors were come to the house where he was, he came down from his chamber and saluted them with a cheerful countenance, and invited them to come in and refresh themselves; desiring only an hour's time for prayer for himself, which being granted, he continued in his devotions for near two hours, with such ardency, that all who heard him admired him, insomuch that several of the soldiers began to repent that they were employed against so holy and venerable a man. Having finished his prayers, they set him upon an ass, and conducted him towards the city. In their road they were met by Herod, the Irenarch, or provost marshal of the city, whose business it was to secure and seize such as made any disturbance, and to keep the peace; and his father Nicetes, who, taking him into their chariot, endeavoured to undermine his constancy, by plausible insinuations, asking him, "what great crime their could be in calling Cæsar lord, and sacrificing? by which means he might escape death." To which he, at first, made no reply; and, upon their pressing for an answer, he told them, "that no sufferings, not even death itself, should prevail with him, to commit so enormous a crime." Whereupon they turned their seeming kindness into reproaches, and loading him with abusive language, thrust him out of the chariot so violently, that he fell down and hurt his leg. He got up again, and notwithstanding the hurt he had received, walked on to the city with an undaunted resolution, under the conduct of his guard.

On his arrival at the city, he found the amphitheatre, whither he was conducted, crowded with spectators, who expected his coming. Upon his entering the place, after the confused noise and tumult among the people was ceased, a voice was heard from heaven by many, which said unto him,

him, "Be courageous, Polycarp, and quit thyself like a man!" which could not but remind him of that glorious promise made to him by Christ, about seventy years before, "Be faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Rev. ii. 10.

Polycarp being brought before the court, was received with a great shout, all rejoicing that he was apprehended. Quadratus, the proconsul, asked him, If he was Polycarp? which being answered in the affirmative, Quadratus then desired him to consider his great age, which could never endure the pains he was to suffer according to the laws, unless he changed his opinion, persuading him to swear by Cæsar, and to say with them, "take away the impious," the usual method of obliging Christians to deny their faith. The venerable old man turned about, and with a stern countenance, looking round on the spectators, waved his hand to them, and lifting up his eyes to heaven, with a groan, said, "Take away the impious." The proconsul hearing this, but having not observed his motions, thought he had in part complied with his advice; and therefore pressed him to proceed, to swear by Cæsar, and to blaspheme CHRIST: promising him upon those terms to release him. To which proposal, he replied, "Fourscore and six years have I served him, and he never yet did me any injury; how then shall I now deny him, and blaspheme my king and my Saviour?" Quadratus still importuning him to swear by Cæsar's Genius; he answered, "Since you are so desirous that I should swear by the emperor's genius, as you call it, as if you knew not who I am; hear my confession, I AM A CHRISTIAN. If you desire to know more of my religion, appoint a time and you shall hear it. The proconsul then "Bid him persuade the people to that." To which he returned, "To you I chuse to address

dress myself, as my religion teaches me to give to princes and the powers which are ordained of God, all due honour, that is not prejudicial to our Christian profession, as for the people, I do not think them competent judges to give an account of my faith.

The proconsul finding his persuasions fruitless, told him he had wild beasts at hand ready to destroy him if he did not change his mind. To this Polycarp replied, "Call for them then, for I will not turn good into evil, it is only honourable to change from vice to virtue, and to pass from a state of sufferings to a state of eternal glory; a change truly desirable. To this Quadratus farther added, "That since he despised the beasts, he would tame him, by the more terrible punishment of fire." To which the martyr answered, "You threaten me with fire which burns but for an hour, and is then extinguished; but you regard not the eternal fire of God's wrath, reserved for the wicked hereafter. But why do you thus delay? Order what punishment you think fit, I am prepared and resolved." This and much more he expressed with a chearful countenance and steady mind, so that the proconsul himself was amazed at his courage and resolution; and finding he could by no means prevail with him; he ordered the cryer of the court to make proclamation as usual, that "Polycarp had confessed himself a Christian." Whereupon the whole multitude cried with a great shout, "This is the great doctor of Asia, and the father of the Christians, this is the destroyer of our Gods, who teaches men not to sacrifice or to worship the deities; and desired Philip the comptroller of the sports, in the Amphitheatre, that he would let loose a lion upon him, but he excused himself, saying that as the shews were over for that day, it was irregular and not to be done. Upon which being resolved upon his death, they all cried out

out, both Jew and gentiles and demanded, that he should be burnt alive, which he had foretold should befall him.

This was granted to their mind, and no sooner had they received this commission, but they every one ran to fetch wood for the execution, all striving to bear a part in the tragedy, especially the Jews, who signified their zeal against the Christians, and exceeded the Pagans in diligence upon the occasion.

Polycarp perceiving that every thing was ready for the consummation of his sacrifice, began to undress: he untied his girdle, and laid aside his garments, and began to pull off his shoes: when the officers, having disposed every thing in order, came to nail him to the stake, he told them, "that would be needless; for, that He, who gave his strength to endure the fire, would also enable him, without nailing, to stand immovable in the hottest flames." Upon which, they only tied his hands behind him with a cord, when he standing like a sheep bound for the slaughter; lifting his eyes up to heaven, poured forth the following prayer to God.

"O, omnipotent Lord God, the father of thy well-beloved and ever blessed son Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the knowledge of thee; the God of angels, powers, and all creatures, especially of all just men, who live in thy presence. I praise and bless thy most holy name, for that thou hast vouchsafed to bring me to this day, and to this hour, that I may receive a portion among thy blessed martyrs, and drink of thy Son's cup; that thereby I may rise again to the resurrection of eternal life, both of my soul and body, by the power of the Holy Ghost. May I this day be received into their number, as an acceptable sacrifice, as thou the only true and faithful God hast prepared, foreshewn, and now accomplished:

for

for this, and all other thy benefits, I praise thee, I bless thee, I glorify thee, with Jesus Christ, thy eternal and beloved Son; to whom with thee, and the Holy Ghost, be glory and honour, now and for evermore, Amen.

As soon as he had finished his prayer, the fire was kindled, when (as it is reported by those who were present, and beheld it) the flames wonderfully divided themselves, and formed a dome gently encompassing his body, which remained in the fire, like pure gold unhurt, and sent forth a delightful fragrancy, like frankincense.

The infidels enraged, rather than convinced at this prodigy, commanded the executioner to stab him with his sword, which being done, there issued such a quantity of blood from the wound, as quite extinguished the fire, to the great wonder of all the beholders.

The Christians were desirous of giving him a decent and honourable burial, but were prevented by some Jews, who prompted Nicetes to persuade the proconsul not to suffer it, lest the Christians should worship it, as they had done Christ, (little considering, how improbable it was, that Christians would forsake their Lord to worship his disciple;) to prevent which, the body was ordered to be burned in the pile; nevertheless the Christians took up his bones, and gave them a decent interment. In which place they then agreed to meet annually in commemoration of his martyrdom, both to honour his memory, and to encourage others to give the like testimony of their faith. Both which considerations, gave birth to the anniversary commemoration of the martyrs, generally observed in the primitive church, tho' now only the apostles and evangelists, are taken notice of by Protestants, and some neglect even them.

Thus

Thus died this aged and religious martyr, the disciple of St. John, on the 23d day of February, A. D. 166, aged 120 years, after he had been bishop of Smyrna about 84 years.

We have nothing left of his writings, but his excellent epistle to the Philippian churches, which was valued by the antients next to the holy scriptures, and as St. Jerome assures us, was read in the Asiatic churches, and which is now translated into English, by the same most reverend author, as are those of Clements and Ignatius.

JUSTIN the Philosopher and Martyr.

A. D. 167.

JUSTIN was a native of Neapolis, a city of Samaria, anciently called Sychem or Sycar. He was born in the year 103. His father's name was Priscus, son of Bacchius, a Gentile, who took care to have him educated in all the learning and philosophy of the heathen world, of which he has given us ample proof in his writings. To advance himself in knowledge, while young he travelled into foreign parts, especially Egypt, a country remarkable for his purpose: here, at Alexandria, as himself tells us, he had an account of the seventy interpreters of the holy scriptures, and was shewn the cells wherein they performed that elaborate work.

Justin was endowed with excellent qualities of mind, but an ardent love of truth was his predominant passion; for which invaluable jewel he made a diligent search among all who pretended to have any acquaintance therewith. He first applied himself to the Stoic philosophy, from whence he received no satisfaction; nay, so far was his

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master from teaching him any thing of the Supreme Being, that he owned himself, knew nothing at all of the matter, and looked on it as an idle, unnecessary enquiry, accounting for every thing by the absurd notion of fatality.

His next instructor was a Peripatetic: Justin had not been long under his tuition, but he pressed him to come to some terms of agreement with him, and desired to know what he was to have for his trouble in instructing him. His scholar looked on this as an indication of a base and narrow mind, unfit for a philosopher, and so left him.

These disappointments however did not deter him from his pursuit after Truth, and therefore he next entered himself under a Pythagorean, a man of considerable figure in the learned world. The first question this philosopher asked him was, whether he understood music, astronomy and geometry, and very gravely assured him, that it would be in vain for him to attempt any enquiries into intellectual and spiritual things, till he had first conquered these, and disengaged his mind from all sensible objects. Upon Justin's owning that he was unacquainted with these sciences, he was dismissed as incapable of studying in Pythagoras's school; though what had been told him by this philosopher, made a great impression on his mind, yet considering the time that he must necessarily spend in these preliminary studies, and impatient of so long a delay, he resolved next to try his fortune among the Platonics, a set then in great vogue in the world; therefore entering himself under a professor of that sect, he gave him a very favourable reception, and admitted him to his conversation with great freedom and civility, and proved very communicative. The doctrine of ideas charmed him, and, as himself expresses

it, seemed to give wings, and raised him above himself. He took great pleasure in contemplating on the incorporeal beings, imagining himself that in a little time he should investigate truth, which was the grand end of the Platonic philosophers. But in this he was not satisfied till after he became acquainted with the truths of the gospel, and a convert to Christianity, which happened about the year 133, when he was about thirty years of age.

God having a particular regard for the purity of his intentions, would nor let him miss of his end, though he was much mistaken in his choice of the means. Full of phantastic hope, and fond of the agreeable delusion in the thought of obtaining the end of his desires, as he was one day walking by the sea-side, to indulge himself in solitude, and give a loose to contemplation, he was met by a venerable old man, of a majestic deportment, with a mixture of gravity, and sweetness in his countenance, who fell into a discourse with him of their respective studies and employments, when our philosopher found this was the person he had so long sought after. The knowledge of truth, the nature of God, the immortality of the soul, the reward of virtue, and the punishment of vice, were the topics of their conversation.

Justin handled these important subjects according to the principles of the Platonic philosophy, which he affirmed to teach the only true way to happiness. But his companion soon confuted him, and let him see, that all his philosophy was only the result of a few smooth words and phrases, without any distinct meaning.

The energy of this unknown person's arguments, threw the philosopher into a restless uncertainty, "What must I do then, says he, and from whom must I expect instruction in true and saving knowledge, since all I depended on for assist-

assistance, in this great affair, are no better than ignorant pretenders?" The stranger laid hold on this opportunity to press the great truths of the gospel, and told him, That long time before these superficial philosophers appeared in the world, there were a set of just men, called prophets, who were dear to God; inspired with, and instructed by his Holy Spirit. "They only, said he, were acquainted with the truth, and delivered it to others without disguise, vanity, fear or interest. They published nothing but what the Holy Spirit dictated: their works are still extant, and in them we find solid instructions of the first principles of all beings, and their end. The truths which they attest, are not supported by long and elaborate demonstrations of human reason, but by the completion of their predictions, and the miracles they performed. They gave the world the knowledge of God the father, the creator of all things, and of his Son, Jesus Christ." Concluding his discourse with advising him to pray, that the gates of light might be set open to him, telling him, that these things were not perceived and understood by any, unless God and Christ granted men the knowledge of them. He enlarged much on this subject; and when he had raised the mind of Justin to a desire of seeing the works of those true philosophers he departed. This account is given by Justin himself in his dialogue with Trypho the Jew.

This discourse made so great an impression on the mind of Justin, that he earnestly set about perusing the works of the prophets, and enquiring seriously into the doctrines of Christianity, which he confesses he found to be the only certain philosophy, and best fitted to yield a sweet serenity to the mind of man, in which he was greatly confirmed, by taking notice of the innocent

cent and excellent lives of Christians, and their constancy in enduring the greatest torments, and most terrible deaths for their religion.

After his baptism, he still continued to wear the pallium, or the philosopher's cloak, a distinguishing habit worn in those days by such as professed a more retired life than the generality of mankind, and frequently continued by such Christians, as, before their conversion, had been professed philosophers.

The so sudden departure of this eminent father from Heathenism, was no less trouble to the more considerate gentiles, than it was joy to the Christians: when to satisfy and convert the former, he wrote a particular discourse, wherein he tells them; "He had not rashly, and without judgment left the rites of their religion, but because he could find nothing therein truly sacred, and worthy of God, it being on the contrary full of confusion." And then, after many convincing arguments of the folly of paganism, and the excellency of Christianity, he concludes with this serious exhortation; "Come hither, O ye Greeks, and partake of a most incomparable wisdom, and a divine religion, and acquaint yourselves with an immortal king. Become as I am, who was some time as you are, but have been convinced, by these arguments, of the efficacy, and divinity of the christian doctrine."

He staid some time after his conversion in Palestine, making it appear, both by his life and doctrine, that he was really a true Christian philosopher: whether Justin ever received sacred orders, or not, is very uncertain; but whatever his station might be, we are certain that he employed his talent faithfully, as a christian; disputing with and confounding the Jews, from such authorities as themselves held most sacred, producing texts from the old testament, to prove that

Jesus the author of our religion, was the true Messiah. His zeal put him upon making several journies, into the provinces of the empire, till about the year 139, when he fixed his habitation principally at Rome : dwelling, as appears from the acts of his martyrdom, near the Timothine baths, which were upon the Viminal Mount. Here he made many converts, and kept a sort of a school, for the benefit of the gospel, whither, his reputation drew him many scholars, that they might be thoroughly instructed in the word of God; among whom was Tatian, who succeeded him in his employment, and taught also with great success, till he afterward unhappily fell into error, and became the founder of a sect, called Encratites, who made profession of continency, condemned the use of marriage, and held it unlawfull to eat the flesh of animals, or to drink wine. But this was not till after the death of his master.

Justin employed himself strenuously to defend and promote the cause of Christianity, particularly to beat down and confute the heresies, which then infected the church. He wrote a book against all sorts of heresies, especially against Marcion, who began his heresy about the year 144. teaching, "That there were two Gods ; one the creator of the world, the God of the old testament, and the author of evil ; the other a more supreme Being, and the Father of Christ, whom he sent into the world to dissolve the law and the prophets, and to destroy the works of the other deity.

A. D. 150. The Christians, who had lately suffered much from heretics, began now to be more severely treated by the pagans ; for though the emperor himself was remarkably mild and generous, and had published no edicts against them ; yet by the malice of the heathens, they were represented as a wicked and barbarous people scandalous

alous and abominable in their nocturnal assemblies, and were hardly dealt with in every place, being frequently prosecuted upon edicts of former emperors, and by the standing laws of the empire.

To clear them from these aspersions, and to alleviate the hardships they laboured under, Justin now published his first apology in their favour, which he addressed to the emperor, and his two adopted sons, to the senate, and the Roman people; wherein with great strength of reason, he defends the Christians from the common objections and calumnies of their enemies; proves the divinity of the Christian faith, and shews how unjust and unreasonable it was to proceed against them, without due conviction and forms of law; acquaints them with the innocent rites and customs of the Christian assemblies; and lastly, reminded the emperor of the practice of his predecessor Adrian in this case, who had commanded that the Christians should not be needlessly and unjustly vexed on the account of their religion, but that their cause should be heard and determined in open court. And to this he annexed a copy of the decree of Adrian to that purpose.

This apology is written with all the spirit and freedom of an old prophet, though with all the respect due to the character of an emperor; and contains so much of the doctrine, manners and customs of the primitive Christians, that it is one of the most valuable pieces of antiquity we have left upon record. In this we may find the primitive doctrine of the church concerning the holy undivided Trinity, the incarnation of our Saviour, and eternal life: as also proofs of the Christian religion, the holiness and conversation of its professors, together with a description of their assemblies, and the ceremonies used in the administration of both sacraments.

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This address of Justin had its desired effect; for the emperor naturally of a mild and compassionate temper, being moved partly by this apology, partly by the accounts he received from other parts of the Empire, wrote in favour of the Christians into Greece, and in the 15th year of his reign, A. D. 152, published an edict which was directed to the common assembly of Asia, wherein having alledged his fathers orders, " that none should be any ways molested, unless convicted of attempts against the Roman Empire, &c. He thus concludes, " If any still create them trouble, merely because they are Christians, let him that is indicted be discharged, though he appear to be of that sect, and let his accuser undergo the punishment.

It is not at all unlikely, that Justin accompanied them who carried this epistle into Asia, for we next find him there, disputing with Trypho the Jew, a man of note and eminence, who in a late war and rebellion against the Romans, had fled his own country, and retired into Greece, where he had much improved himself, by conversing with the Grecian sages and philosophers. He coming to Ephesus, met there with Justin, and knowing his profession, by his dress, he entered into conversation with him upon philosophical points. Justin took that opportunity of opening to him the great truths of Christianity, and a conference was held between them, which lasted two days. In which, our philosopher, remembering that he had a Jew to engage with, opened the conference, with shewing the vanity and imperfection of the doctrines and speculations of the heathen philosophers, and the superior excellency of the prophets; whence he proceeded to give an account of his own conversion, as before related, and then admirably defended and made good the truth of the Christian religion; proving from an infinite number of passages in the old testament, that Jesus Christ, was the Messiah,
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and the word ; who first appeared to the Patriarchs, and afterwards condescend-d to be made man, and to be born of a Virgin, for our salvation : he not only dissolved all the jewish pleas and pretensions, against Christianity, but discovered their envy and malice, who not content with rejecting the profession themselves, sent persons about the world, to ipread abroad, that Jesus the Galilæan was a deceiver and a seducer, whose whole religion was all a cheat and an imposture ; solemnly Anathematizing in their public synagogues, all such as embraced Christianity, hating and destroying them whenever they got them in their power. The issue of this conference was, that the Jew acknowledged himself highly pleased, professing he found more in his discourse than he expected, wishing he might enjoy it oftener, and begging his friendship in what part of the world soever he was.

A. D. 165. About this time, Justin returned again out of Asia to Rome, where notwithstanding the persecution raged, it did not in the least discourage him from defending the faith. He had frequent contests with Crescens, the noted Cynic philosopher, who was not only proud and ill natured, but a notorious slave to all vice and wickedness. He endeavoured by all base arts to traduce the Christians, and to represent their religion under the most infamous character, which proceeded, either from downright malice, or else from wicked ignorance in the Christian affairs ; as Justin offered to make good if admitted to a public disputation with him, before the emperor and the senate, assuring them, that, “either he had never considered the Christian doctrines, and then he was worse than the meanest idiots, who never pronounced sentence in matters unknown to them ; or if he had, it was plain, that either he had no knowledge of them, or out of a base compliance with his Auditors, dissembled it for fear of being counted a
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Christian; and thereby incurring the fate of Socrates, whose excellent principle it was, "No man was to be regarded before the truth."

This free and impartial censure so exasperated the Cynic, that that he endeavoured at, and, shortly after, found means to accomplish the destruction of the philosopher.

A. D. 166. There was at this time at Rome a certain woman, who, together with her husband, had lived in all manner of debauchery and wantonness for several years; she being converted to Christianity, and having left off her former course of life, endeavoured by all the means in her power to reclaim her husband from his wicked course of life, but he was deaf to, and hardened against all her persuasions; and though he made her life very uneasy, yet by the advice of her friends, she continued still to cohabit with him, hoping that time might reduce him, till he growing at length insupportable, she sued out a divorce against him. This so far enraged him that he accused her with being a Christian; when she petitioning to be heard, he dropped the prosecution against her, and turned his rage upon one Ptolemeus, by whom she had been converted to Christianity, whom he procured to be sent to prison, where he was a long time tortured, merely for confessing himself to be a Christian. At length, being brought before Urbicus, the præfect of the city, he was condemned to die. Upon which one Lucius, another Christian who stood by, could not forbear representing to the judge, "that it was very unjust that an innocent and virtuous man should be condemned to suffer merely for being a Christian; and that such proceedings were disgraceful both to the emperor and the senate of Rome." Which he had no sooner spoken, than he

he, with a third person (who had expressed the same sentiments) were sentenced to the same fate. Lucius thanking him for delivering them from wicked governors on earth, and sending them to the righteous governor in heaven.

The severity of these proceedings, and several more of the like nature, engaged Justin to write a second apology, directed to the emperor and senate of Rome, in which he clearly stated the case, and complained of the injustice and cruelty of such proceedings, to punish men merely for being Christians, without ever accusing them of any other crimes; answered the usual objections made against them, desiring no more favour, than by this apology to represent their case to the world, that they might judge of the same.

A. D. 167. The emperor Antoninus-Philosophus, being of a very different temper from his predecessor Pius, took no notice of this apology, and being zealous of the Pagan rites, all that Justin had said in their favour, could not make any impression on him, or overcome his prejudice against the Christians, whose resolution and courage in death, he ascribed to stubbornness and obstinacy.

This was a favourable opportunity for Crescens to shew his spleen against Justin; nor did he fail to lay hold on it, to set the emperor against him, insinuating that Justin himself was an active promoter of the Christian religion, and procured his commitment to prison, where the Greek writers tell us, he was prepared for his martyrdom by several antecedent tortures.

The time being come when Justin was to seal that faith with his blood; which he had so bravely defended with his pen, he, and six of his companions, who had been apprehended, were brought before Rusticus, the præfect of that city, who was

was a great philosopher, and had been tutor to the present emperor Antoninus : he seeing Justin, directed his discourse to him as the principal person among them, and required him and his companions to obey the gods, and comply with the the emperor's edicts. To which the martyr answered, That no man could be justly condemned, who obeyed the commands of Jesus Christ. Then the governor asked him, In what kind of learning and discipline he had been educated ? To which he returned, " that he had endeavoured to understand all the various kinds of discipline, tried all methods of learning, and experienced the insufficiency of all that bear the name of philosophy in the world, which had determined him to embrace Christianity, the only true philosophy, though so much despised by the generality of mankind. Miserable wretch ! exclaimed the governor, art thou then captivated with that discipline ? I am, replied Justin ; for with sound doctrine do I follow the Christians. And being asked what that doctrine was ? he answered, The true doctrine which we profess is this, " we believe the only God to be the creator of all things, visible and invisible, and our Lord Jesus Christ to be the Son of God, foretold by the antient prophets, and who shall come to be the judge of all mankind, a saviour, a preacher of righteousness, and a master of all who are duly instructed by him. That as for himself, he was too mean to say any thing concerning his infinite Deity ; that this was the business of the prophets, who had many ages foretold the coming of the Son of God into the world.."

The præfect then enquired, where it was that the Christians assembled : and being told, That the God of the Christians was not confined to any particular place. He next asked, Where it was that

that Justin usually instructed his disciples? He gave him an account of the place where he lived, acknowledging that he there taught the Christian doctrine to all such as resorted to him.

Then, after having examined his companions severally, the præfect thus addressed himself to Justin, "Hear, you that are noted for eloquence, and think yourself in the right way, do you think you shall go to heaven, after I have torn your body from head to foot with whips?" Justin replied, "though he should suffer all that he had threatened, and much more, yet he hoped to enjoy the portion of all true Christians, well knowing that the divine favour was laid up for all such, as long as the world endured." What then, said Rusticus, you imagine you shall go to heaven, and there be rewarded? I do not only imagine it, answered Justin, but know it; and am so well assured of it, that I have not the least doubt about the matter.

Here Rusticus broke off the discourse, and commanded the philosopher, and his companions, to go all together, and sacrifice to the gods. To which the holy martyr replied, That no man in his right mind could desert truth, to embrace error, and that such a deed in them, who had embraced the truth, would betray both impiety and folly. Rusticus not choosing to hear any more of the matter, took a shorter method of arguing, and told them, that if they did not comply with his demands, they should feel the utmost of his power, and be punished without mercy. Which words carried nothing terrible in them to persons prepared to meet the most cruel death, rather than do an action unworthy their profession. And therefore Justin replied to the menace of the governor, "that they wished for nothing more earnestly than to endure torments for the sake of Christ, and be saved, which would add to their

happinefs, and procure them confidence at the dreadful tribunal of our Lord and faviour, before which the whole world muft appear." To which the reft affented, crying out, " Difpatch us as foon as you please, for we are Chriftians, and cannot facrifice to idols." Whereupon the governor pronounced fentence upon them, That feeing they had refused to facrifice to the gods, and to obey the emperor's decrees, they fhould according to the laws be firft fcourged, and then afterwards beheaded. The holy martyrs rejoiced, and blessed God for this honour beftowed upon them; and being led back to prifon, they were executed according to their fentence. Their bodies were taken up, and decently interred by the Chriftians. What were the names of the fix fellow sufferers with Juftin, antiquity has left us no account.

Thus died this celebrated apologist and martyr in the year 167, a man of pious mind, and virtuous life, tender of God's honour, and he concerns of religion: he never valued himfelf for his great abilities, but left others to found his efteem; afcribing the glory of all to the divine grace. He had a true love for all men, a ftrict regard to the welfare of their fouls, whose happinefs he always prayed for and promoted, even of his greateft enemies. In his natural endowments, he was of quick parts, with pleafant and ready wit, judicious both in difcerning and accommodating of things to the beft purpofes; in all which he was greatly improved by his ftudies and learning. He wanted indeed skill in the Hebrew, as many of the fathers did. He is by fome faid to have been guilty of fome heterodox opinions, not currently embraced by the church; but he held fcarce any but what were generally received by the fathers of thofe times; and if we confider the various fefts of philosophy which he paffed through, and his coming

ing to Christ fresh out of Plato's school, it is no wonder, if he retained some of their notions, and endeavoured to reconcile them with Christianity.

His writings, though not entirely free from errors, have been nevertheless justly admired in all ages, though only seven pieces; which are genuine, are at present extant, viz. his exhortation to the Gentiles, his oration to the Greeks, his first and second apology, his book of the Divine Monarchy, his dialogue with Trypho the Jew, and his epistle to Diognetus. There are some ascribed to him, which are doubtful, and others that are certainly spurious.

In this persecution suffered also, in various parts of the Empire, many others, for the sake of Christianity; among whom were twelve at Smyrna, about the same time with Polycarp bishop of that city, A. D. 166.

Quintus a Phrygian, who seeing the courageous death of Germanicus, before mentioned, rushed of his own accord into the judgment-hall, and owning himself to be a Christian was condemned, and gave all men an example, that none ought to precipitate themselves into such dangers without being called thereto, by God. A. D. 166.

Metrodorus, a minister at Smyrna who was burnt. Also Pionius, who after much boldness of speech used in preaching to the people, and making apologies in defence of the Christian faith, after having laboured much in charity, relieving and comforting such of the Christians as were in prison, or otherways afflicted; was himself put to many cruel torments, and at the last finished his Martyrdom by fire.

happiness, and procure them confidence at the dreadful tribunal of our Lord and saviour, before which the whole world must appear." To which the rest assented, crying out, " Dispatch us as soon as you please, for we are Christians, and cannot sacrifice to idols." Whereupon the governor pronounced sentence upon them, That seeing they had refused to sacrifice to the gods, and to obey the emperor's decrees, they should according to the laws be first scourged, and then afterwards beheaded. The holy martyrs rejoiced, and blessed God for this honour bestowed upon them; and being led back to prison, they were executed according to their sentence. Their bodies were taken up, and decently interred by the Christians. What were the names of the six fellow sufferers with Justin, antiquity has left us no account.

Thus died this celebrated apologist and martyr in the year 167, a man of pious mind, and virtuous life, tender of God's honour, and the concerns of religion: he never valued himself for his great abilities, but left others to sound his esteem; ascribing the glory of all to the divine grace. He had a true love for all men, a strict regard to the welfare of their souls, whose happiness he always prayed for and promoted, even of his greatest enemies. In his natural endowments, he was of quick parts, with pleasant and ready wit, judicious both in discerning and accommodating of things to the best purposes; in all which he was greatly improved by his studies and learning. He wanted indeed skill in the Hebrew, as many of the fathers did. He is by some said to have been guilty of some heterodox opinions, not currently embraced by the church; but he held scarce any but what were generally received by the fathers of those times; and if we consider the various sects of philosophy which he passed through, and his coming

ing to Christ fresh out of Plato's school, it is no wonder, if he retained some of their notions, and endeavoured to reconcile them with Christianity.

His writings, though not entirely free from errors, have been nevertheless justly admired in all ages, though only seven pieces; which are genuine, are at present extant, viz. his exhortation to the Gentiles, his oration to the Greeks, his first and second apology, his book of the Divine Monarchy, his dialogue with Trypho the Jew, and his epistle to Diognetus. There are some ascribed to him, which are doubtful, and others that are certainly spurious.

In this persecution suffered also, in various parts of the Empire, many others, for the sake of Christianity; among whom were twelve at Smyrna, about the same time with Polycarp bishop of that city, A. D. 166.

Quintus a Phrygian, who seeing the courageous death of Germanicus, before mentioned, rushed of his own accord into the judgment-hall, and owning himself to be a Christian was condemned, and gave all men an example, that none ought to precipitate themselves into such dangers without being called thereto, by God. A. D. 166.

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Concordus a deacon of Spoleto, being carried to the image of Jupiter in order to oblige him to sacrifice to that God, he not only refused the same, but spit in the face of the image of the deity, for which after divers punishments and torments sustained, he was at last beheaded with a sword.

Of others we have only the names, without either the time or manner of their deaths, a list of which I think would be needless to trouble the reader to peruse.

A. D. 174. The Marcomanni and other nations, being at this time in arms against the Emperor, he marched in person with his army against them, but they drawing him into an ambush, among the Pan-tonian mountains, so blocked him up, that he and his whole army must inevitably have perished, among those dry and barren hills, had they not been relieved, by the immediate interposition of Heaven, at the request of the Christian soldiers, which is thus related, "When the army was driven to such distress that all humane means were vain, nor any relief from their Gods, notwithstanding the many sacrifices they had offered, and the many prayers, they had put up to them for assistance, when parched by the sun, they were so weak, that they could neither fight nor retreat, when there was no dependence, either on their own courage, or fortune, or on their gods; and their enemy ready to fall upon them, in that weak and deplorable situation, and the whole army ready to be destroyed; the Captain of the guard informed the Emperor, that the God of the Christians never denied any thing that they prayed for; that there were many of that sect, in the Melitene Legion, and that he, if he thought proper, might try if their prayers would procure that deliverance, which he could no other ways expect. The Emperor ordered all the Christians in his

his army to be called together, and that they should pray to their God for their deliverance, whom he understood never denied any thing to their prayers, and who had often delivered his servants, by strange and wonderful interpositions; when they, according to the Emperors order, all falling down on their knees, offered up their most ardent Petitions for their own, their fellow soldiers, and the Emperors safety and deliverance. After this, just as their enemies were ready to fall upon them, they were miraculously relieved, by a sudden fall of rain, by which the languishing soldiers, holding up their mouths, their bucklers and their helmets, to catch the rain, were greatly refreshed; and at the same time the clouds which brought such refreshment to the Romans, discharged such a terrible storm of hail accompanied with thunder and lightning against the enemy, that many of them scorched and confounded with the flames from heaven, came over and surrendered themselves to the Romans to avoid the storm, and the rest were all cut to pieces.

Some writes ascribe this victory to the emperor's own prayers to God: and Themistus puts this petition in his mouth, "O Lord, the giver of life, I implore thy assistance, and lift up these hands to thee, which were never stained with human blood." But Antonine himself was too just to stifle the miracle or to disown the cause of his deliverance; and accordingly wrote to the senate at Rome, in favour of the Christians, in which letter he owns his deliverance to have been owing wholly to their prayers, and orders "that they should enjoy the free use of their religion and that none should be punished merely for being a christian, nor obliged to alter his opinion, and that if any of them should be accused, and their accusers should have nothing to object against them but their profession, that then they should be

be discharged," and such malicious accusers punished with death. The consequence of which letter was that the church enjoyed peace for some few years after.

A. D. 177. The Christians had now enjoyed peace for about three years, but notwithstanding the clemency and commands of the emperor, and the several apologies presented to him in their behalf by several very eminent Christians, such as Melito bishop of Sardis, Athenagoras the philosopher, and several others, yet the governors and magistrates of provinces, took such advantage of the emperor's zeal for Paganism, that the persecution was again revived and raged more fiercely than ever, in many parts of the empire, particularly at Lyons in Gaul, at the time of some public festivals, as appears by a letter still extant wrote in the name of the churches of Lyons and Vienna, to the faithful in Asia and Phrygia. Penned as it is believed by Irenæus, who was afterwards their bishop. - This letter tells us that it was impossible to describe the brutal rage of the Pagans, or the severity of the torments which the martyrs suffered, being banished from their houses forbid to shew their heads, reproached, beaten, hurried from place to place, plundered, stoned, imprisoned and treated with all the rage of ungovernable fury; their heathen servants and slaves, forced by tortures, to accuse their masters with murder, incest and other abominable crimes in private.

[It would be endless to recount the various torments which the Christians then suffered, nor is it needful to present to the reader's view the names of them all, were they handed down to posterity; I shall therefore only select a few of the principal ones, who obtained their crown in this persecution.

The Martyrs of L Y O N S.

A D. 177.

THE first of these that occurs is Vettius Agathus, a young man, who fired with a noble resentment at the severe treatment the brethren had met with from the Pagans, desired of the governor to be heard on that subject, in the defence of his brethren; promising to make it appear that the christians were guilty of no impious practices; but the whole croud who were but too well acquainted with the merit of this young man would not admit it, and the governor determined not to grant him his request, interrupted him, and asked him if he was a Christian? this he readily confessed, and was for that received into the number of martyrs, and stiled by the governor, "The advocate for the Christians," but by what death he glorified God, is not related either in the letter, or by historians.

After this, continues the letter, divers others were examined, who with all imaginable cheerfulness, accomplished the solemn confession of martyrdom, only about ten persons who were weak in faith, fell away, to the great grief of the rest. From thence, the martyrs underwent such torments as are inexpressible; and almost beyond belief, so great was the fury, both of the governor and the people against them.

Sanctus, a deacon of Vienna, who being examined by torture, endured inexpressible torments with wonderful patience and courage. The Heathens indeed hoped that these severities would at last have forced some indecent expressions from that

that holy deacon; but he bore all their attacks with such resolution and presence of mind, that he would not so much as tell them his name, his country or station in the world; but to all their interrogatories only answered in Latin, "I am a Christian," refusing to give them any other satisfaction; whereupon the tormentors, by the governor's order, having before tried all other means, now clapped red hot plates of brass upon the tenderest parts of his body, which was all over full of wounds, and so drawn together, that it had lost all external shape of a man: but he, supported by the all-powerful grace of God, still persisted in the profession of his faith. Christ, who suffered in him, making him a glorious instrument to conquer the adversary, and a standing proof to others, that there is nothing terrible or painful where the love of God dwells, or the glory of Christ attracts the heart.

Some days after this martyr was brought on the stage again, the Pagans imagining his whole body to be so sore and inflamed, as not be able to endure the least touch, it would now be an easy matter to overcome him by a repetition of the same cruelties, or by his death to conquer others: but in both they were deceived; for, to their great surprize, upon a second application of their torments, his body recovered its former beauty, and the full use of his limbs; and, by a miracle, what was designed to encrease his pains, proved a cure to those he felt before. When the tormentors finding they could make no impression on him, he was remanded back to prison.

Blandina, a Christian slave, was seized about the same time, who, being of great weakness and infirmity of body, all the faithful, more especially her mistress, were in great fear that she would
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not have strength and courage enough to undergo even the first torments of her examination : but she was so powerfully assisted, and strengthened by God, to the amazement of all, that those who alternately tortured her from morning till night, became weak and tired, owned themselves conquered, professing they had done all in their power, and wondered how she could live, after what she had endured ; declaring that the very least of the torments she had suffered, must have been sufficient to have dispatched her, according to the common course of nature. But this blessed woman, like a courageous champion, received fresh courage and supplies of strength, and it was a refreshment and abatement of pain to her to cry out, and frequently repeat these words, “ I am a Christian, and there is no wickedness amongst us.” This took off the edge of her pain, and made her insensible of her sufferings.

There were several others also tormented, among whom was Biblias, one of the unhappy persons who had denied the faith, but was now recovered. The Pagans thinking, that they could bring one so weak and timorous to what terms they pleased, as she had already denied the faith, they intended now to force her to blaspheme. But in this they were mistaken ; for Christ desiring to save even this lost sheep, endued her with strength to withstand the torture, and by this a momentary pain awakened her mind, by giving her a sample of those eternal torments she must have endured, had she continued in her apostacy ; so that contrary to what they expected from her, she broke out into the following expostulation, “ how can it be imagined, that they should devour children whose religion forbids them to eat even the blood of beasts.”

Attalus, born at Pergamus, a firm and faithful Christian, was another of these martyrs. And Maturus, who, though but lately baptised, was yet bold and strong enough in the faith to withstand the combat.

But when these torments proved ineffectual, they then threw these suffering Christians into dark and loathsome dungeons, stretching their legs to the utmost extent in wooden stocks, and practising all the severities of enraged ministers of darkness, left them destitute of all human assistance, where, some were suffocated, others died of their pains, and some triumphed over all their afflictions, though they had gone through such a scene of sufferings, as must have put an end to their lives, had they not been supported by a divine and supernatural power.

Pothinus Bishop of Lyons, a venerable prelate, being 90 years of age, was the next marked out for destruction; he is supposed to have been sent to Lyons, by Polycarp from Rome. Age and infirmities had brought him so low, that he could scarce move himself; but still he had a vigorous soul in an infirm body; and his desire that Christ might triumph in his martyrdom, added fresh life and spirits to his decayed body. Him they apprehended, and dragged him along to the governor; the magistrates, soldiers and mob following at his heels, hollowing and reviling him, with as much eagerness, as they had before done his blessed master. Being set before the governor, he asked him, "Who was the God of the Christians?" To which, the venerable bishop, knowing it to be an ensnaring question, answered, "If you be worthy, you shall know." The governor offended at this answer, ordered him to be beat for it: whereupon, without any reverence to his age, or respect to humanity, he was dragged up and down,
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most inhumanly abused, and unmercifully beaten; those who were near, striking him with their fists, and kicking him, while others at greater distances throwing whatever they could find as instruments of their fury at him; thinking thereby to revenge the quarrel of their Gods, and that the least tenderness towards him would be an unpardonable crime. At length, breathless and almost expiring, he was taken off the ground, and thrown into prison, where, two days after, he expired of the wounds and bruises he had received.

As to those who had denied the faith when first taken, they were nevertheless imprisoned, and shared the sufferings of the rest, but with this difference, that those who generously owned their faith, were confined only as Christians, and had no other crime laid their charge; but the other miserable wretches were imprisoned as murderers and criminals, and tortured with the remorse of a guilty conscience for their apostacy; while the martyrs enjoyed the joyful prospect, of laying down their Lives in the glorious cause of Christ, and were supported by the power and promises of God.

When the martyrs were brought forth, a mixture of chearfulness and majesty appeared in their countenances; their chains seemed ornaments, more like birth day jewels than marks of disgrace; and their bodies instead of the loathsome smell of a goal, sent forth a sweet and agreeable odour; so that some suspected they had used perfumes. But those who had deserted their Saviour, were every way the reverse; they were melancholy, dejected, loathsome and disagreeable; the very Pagans reproached them with cowardice and effeminacy, calling them base creatures and murderers.

Variety of torments were appointed for the martyrs, and thus they offered to their eternal father, a garland composed of various flowers ; and in lieu thereof received from him, a crown of eternal glory, as a reward for their glorious victory.

On a set day, when the public were to be entertained at the expence of the lives of the Christians, the four champions already mentioned, Sanctus, Attalus, Maturus and Blandina, were brought to the Amphitheatre ; where Sanctus and Maturus underwent all their former torments, as if they had suffered nothing before. They were whipped like criminals as they passed, were dragged about and torn by the wild beasts, and felt all the rage of a barbarous and clamorous rabble, while several persons, recommended as many different kinds of torment, and were all gratified in their turn ; at last they became unanimous, in requiring them to be placed on red hot iron chairs, which being done, their bodies fried in them till the smell became offensive to the spectators of this impious Tragedy ; but their fury did not at all abate against them, in hopes that they should at last conquer their patience. But notwithstanding all their torments, Sanctus continued firm in his former confession, and all that they could obtain from him was, that he was a Christian : and at last, after having continued a long time in this glorious combat, they were both slain with a sword, having been made the entertainment of a whole day to the populace, instead of the usual sports of the Gladiators.

As for Blandina, she was fixed on a post in the amphitheatre for the beasts to devour, and stretching out her arms in the ardour of prayer, by her posture, put the faithful in mind of their crucified Lord, and redoubled the ardour of the saints.

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After she had continued thus exposed for some time, and the beasts refused to touch her, even though provoked thereto, she was taken down from the post, and cast again into prison, being reserved for another trial.

Attalus was the next called for ; the people being very clamorous, to see him suffer, he being a man of great reputation, and one who had always bore a glorious character, among the christians, for his excellent life. He was led round the Amphitheatre, with this inscription carried before him, " This is Attalus the Christian." The whole mob were ready to discharge all their rage upon him ; when the governor being acquainted, that he was a Roman citizen ; remanded him again to the prison, together with the rest of the Christians ; and wrote to the emperor Antonine to know his pleasure concerning them.

During this interval, the holy prisoners spent their time in the highest Acts of devotion and charity, praying for their enemies and torturers, and using all possible means for comforting and restoring their fallen brethren : being at the same time so full of humility, as to refuse the honourable title of martyrs. The governor, in a short time received an answer from the emperor, acquainting him, " that those who confessed themselves Christians should suffer, but those who renounced their faith should be dismissed." Having received this answer, he took the opportunity of a publick festival, when a great concourse of people from all parts were gathered together, to entertain them with their sufferings ; and accordingly, on the day appointed, the martyrs were again brought forth ; when after a repetition of the usual interrogatories, he sentenced such as were Roman citizens to lose their heads, and the rest to be given to the wild beasts.

And now the glory of Christ was magnified, in the unexpected confession, of such as had before denied their religion. These weak persons were examined privately, with a view of giving them their liberty, but upon their declaring themselves Christians, they were added to the number of the martyrs. While they were under examination, one Alexander, a courageous Phrygian physician, gave them so much encouragement, that he himself was taken notice of, and apprehended ; when being asked who he was, he replied, " He was a Christian ;" upon which he was sentenced to be thrown to the wild beasts. The day following, he and Artalus, whom the governor had delivered up to the same fate to please the people, were both brought to the stage to suffer, where they both underwent all the several kinds of torture, praising the almighty, and at last resigning up their souls into his hands, being in the end, beheaded with a sword. Alexander was not heard all the time either to sigh or groan ; and Attalus, in the height of his torments on the iron chair, turning to the people, said to them, " this, may with justice be said to be devouring human flesh ; and thus you are guilty of that inhuman act ; and not we that are Christians ; and being asked what was the name of his God, he answered, that God had not a name like man.

On the last day of the festival, Blandina and Ponticus a lad of about 15 years of age, were brought forth ; they had before been obliged to attend the execution of the other martyrs, and were now called themselves to suffer, or to swear by the heathen idols ; upon their refusing to comply with the demand, and expressing a contempt of such pretended gods, the people gave a loose to their rage, and had no regard either for the youth of Ponticus, or the sex of Blandina ; but

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exposed them to all the punishments, and made them pass thro' the whole course of torments; calling to them all the time, to swear by their idols: this they refused, nor could all their torments reduce the instability of youth, or the weakness of the woman to comply.

Ponticus, encouraged and strengthened by his companion and sister in affliction, went through all the stages of his martyrdom, with a courage far superior to his years; and, after many exquisite tortures, died gloriously.

At last, Blandina having, like a valiant mother, supported her children, and sent them before her, to their heavenly king, hastened herself with joy to her exit, as to a nuptial feast. And having been scourged, tortured upon the iron chair, and exposed to the wild beasts, she was sewed up in a net, and thrown on the horns of a wild bull, and greatly gored by him, going through all, as insensible of pain, having her mind fixed on her redeemer, for whose sake she suffered all these torments, she was at last slain with a sword; the Pagans themselves confessing, that never any woman sustained so many and so great torments.

Nor did the enemies rage cease with the lives of the martyrs, but they afterwards exerted all their force against their dead bodies; those who had died in prison were thrown to the dogs, and a strict guard kept night and day, to prevent their friends from taking them away, to bestow upon them the rites of burial; and the mangled limbs of the martyrs, which the fire, or the beasts had left, were thrown together and watched in the same manner; nor could either intreaties, or money prevail on the guard, to suffer any of them to be taken away; while the Heathens vented bitter sarcasms against them, extolling their idols, to whom they ascribed this miserable end of their enemies; and insulted the Christians, asking, "Where was now their God? And what

service their religion had been of to them, which they preferred to their lives? The martyrs bodies having laid thus exposed for six days, and under all manner of ignominious usage, they were at last burnt to ashes, and thrown into the river Rhone; the Pagans supposing thereby, that they had gained a compleat victory over God, and deprived the martyrs of their hopes in the resurrection, crying out, "Let us now see, what will become of their pretended resurrection; and whether their God is able to deliver them out of our hands."

These martyrs, according to the best accounts, to the number of 48; suffered in the month of August, A. D. 177. and the 17th year of Antoninus Philosophus.

EPIPODIUS and ALEXANDER, Martyrs at Lyons, A. D. 179.

AMONG many other Martyrs, in several parts of the Empire, who suffered this year, the persecution still continuing in different provinces, under different governors were the two Christian hero's now before us, the first of whom, Epipodius was a native of Lyons in France, and Alexander either born in Greece, or descended from Grecian parents; they were both of them of considerable families. They were brought up together and contracted a friendship for each other in their infancy, which increased with their years, and was improved by their union in Christianity, and an exact conformity of inclinations; their improvements in human literature were great, in the graces of Christianity greater.

They proved a mutual assistance to each other, and prepared themselves for martyrdom, by the constant

constant practice of sobriety, modesty, chastity, the works of mercy, and a religious contempt of the pleasures of this world. They were in the flower of their youth, when the plague of persecution, in the year 177, began to rage at Lyons; to avoid which, having seen the rage of the heathens discharged on Pothinus and his flock, they left the town privately, and retired to a neighbouring village, where they were concealed by the care of a Christian widow, whose fidelity and the obscurity of the place protected them some time; but as the malice of the persecutors was indefatigable in search after two such eminent persons, they were at length discovered, and without any charge or examination committed to prison. After three days they were presented to the governor with their hands tied behind them, and examined before a great crowd of idolaters; who hearing them confess Jesus Christ, expressed their resentment in a loud and tumultuous manner. And the judge, giving a free loose to his rage, asked, what signified all the former executions if there still remained those who dared to confess Christ. Therefore being resolved to try his utmost skill to corrupt their integrity, lest they should encourage one another, he separated them, sending Alexander back to prison, but detained Epipodius, who seemed to be the youngest in court, imagining he might the more easily prevail with him. To this end he began first to practice on him with expressions of kindness and a concern for his condition. Why, says he, should you ruin yourself by your obstinacy. And as it were to obviate Epipodius his answer of the necessity of persevering in the worship of God, though at the expence of his life, without waiting for any reply to his former question, he proceeded to observe that the heathen deities were worshipped by the whole world, and the princes who were masters of it. "We, says he, honour our Gods with feasting and mirth, while

you adore a crucified man, whose services opposed those engaging entertainments, and who will not allow his votaries the enjoyments and pleasures of this life, has declared against mirth and all the pleasures of our senses, enjoins fasting, and recommends the barren virtue of chastity, what can you hope or expect from him who could not secure himself, from the insults and persecutions of the most contemptible people, consider this seriously; and leave this useless austerity, and enjoy the satisfaction of this world in a manner suitable to your Age."

This delusive reasoning was all lost upon Epipodius, who replied, "The pretended compassion you express for me does not in the least affect me. A heart full of faith and love to Christ, can never be moved by such discourse; what you esteem a tenderness to me, I deem cruelty, and what you recommend as an agreeable life, to me appears the way to a certain and eternal death. You know not that Jesus Christ, after he had suffered as you observe, arose from the dead, and has prepared a life of immortality for all such as serve him truly. Man is most certainly composed of two substances, soul and body; our religion directs us to reduce the body under subjection, and to maintain the superiority of the soul, the feasts with which you honour your Gods, may indeed afford some sensual gratification, some small satisfaction to the body, but destroys and murders the soul. How then can you call that life, which totally destroys the best part of a man, of which we take the greatest care. And at last when you have had your fill of pleasures as you call them, and indulged your appetites with the most licentious freedom, the delightful scene ends in a miserable and comfortless death, whereas though we suffer by your hands, our pains are succeeded by substantial and eternal happiness." This speech of the young man's, so full of sound reason,

son, discovered so much courage and resolution, that the angry judge ordered his mouth to be stopt with blows; which was presently done, after this he replied, It is but reasonable that I should resign my soul to him, who created and redeemed me. This will not be dying, but passing to a better life. Here he was again interrupted, and stretched upon the rack, and two executioners ordered to tear his flesh with iron-hooks. The courage and tranquillity with which the holy martyr suffered these torments, so enraged the people, that with loud clamours and confusion of noise they demanded he might be given to them to be stoned, or torn to pieces, as their fury should direct, upon which the governor fearing an insurrection, ordered him to be taken from the rack and beheaded, which was forthwith executed.

Two days after this execution, Alexander was brought before the same magistrate; who endeavoured to intimidate him, by telling him of the numbers of martyrs he had made from among the Christians and that he was almost the last, who bore the hated name, which relation instead of intimidating, strengthened and encouraged him to follow them. "You are mistaken, said Alexander, if you think it possible to extinguish the Christian name, our religion is built upon so solid a foundation, that the life of its votaries preserves it, and their deaths propagate it with certain success. I own I am a Christian, and so I will continue to my last moment." The governor enraged at this resolution ordered him also to be stretched on the rack, and three executioners to beat him, and as they relieved each other, he continued some time under their hands without betraying the least impatience or uneasiness at what he suffered. The governor finding him invincible and envying him the glory of a long execution, ordered him to be crucified; but he had already suffered so much that
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he expired as soon as he was fastened on the cross. Their bodies where forbidden to be buried, but not being so narrowly watched as the former martyrs, the Christians found means to convey them away secretly, and to give them a private interment. E-pipodius suffered April the 22d. and Alexander the 24th, A. D. 179.

MARCELLUS and VALERIAN, Martyrs A. D. 179.

THESE two holy men were united by blood as well as religion being near relations to each other, and both sufferers for the same cause. They were imprisoned at Lyons among the memorable martyrs before mentioned, in the year 177, by what means they recovered their liberty, history has not yet informed us. Tho' we are told that after having escaped the violence of the persecution, they travelled different ways to provide for their own safety. Marcellus went into the territory of Bezancon, where he became the happy instrument of several conversions, but the persecution following him into those parts, he went to Chalons: but avoided going into the town where he was well known; but however notwithstanding all his caution he fell into the hands of Priscus the governor of the province. That magistrate was no stranger to the character of and profession of Marcellus, and having him now in his power, he ordered him to be tied to some branches of trees, bent down for that purpose, that so they being loosed on a sudden and endeavouring to recover their natural position might tear his body in sunder, but this barbarous invention not answering the proposed end, he was conducted to Chalons, where he was strongly solicited

solicited to assist at the idolatrous sacrifices or at the least to taste some of the meat offered to the idols, both which he as strongly refused; upon which he felt the rage of heathen bigotry, and suffered variety of punishments for his contempt of their idols. At last finding him invincible, he was fixt in the ground above the waste, in which manner after three days he expired.

After the death of Marcellus, Priscus went for Lyons, but stopping at Mascon, afterwards Tournes; he was informed that Valerian was very active in that country, and made several converts, he dispatched a messenger to seize him, and then put him on the rack, to oblige him to alter his religion, but he persisting firm in his faith, he ordered him to be beheaded.

These two are generally by martyrologists placed together on the account of their relationship and beginning their sufferings about the same time at Lyons, though they did not finish their course together, yet they suffered death shortly after each other, and both, A. D. 179.

About the same time suffered Benignus at Dijon, Speusippus, and many others, at Langres; Androches, Thyrsus and Felix, at Salieu, near Autun; Sympovian and Florella, at Autun; Severinus, Felician and Exuperus, at Vienna; Cecilia virgin at Sicily; and Thraseus a bishop of Phrygia, at Smyrna; accounts of some of whom are still extant, but so corrupted, and so little to be depended on that I think it needless to trouble the reader therewith.

A. D. 180. Antoninus dying was succeeded by Commodus his son, who as he did not imitate his father in moral virtues, and philosophy, nor yet in those malignant effects which they produced against Christianity. The Christians had therefore the

the greatest cause to exult in that general joy which was expressed at his ascending the imperial throne, for this happy Crisis gave peace and quietness to the church throughout the world, and numbers of all ranks were invited to the worship of the true God, among whom were many Roman citizens eminent both for fortune and descent, who with their whole families embraced Christianity and became obedient to the gospel. And so free was the church from persecution, under this Emperor, that we find but one martyr of any note, during his whole reign, of whom here followeth the account.

A P O L L O N I U S, a Senator of Rome and Martyr. A. D. 186.

AMONG the several eminent persons at Rome who embraced Christianity during the peace of the church Apollonius was one; a man every way qualified to challenge the esteem of mankind. He was a senator of Rome, well skilled in all the polite learning of the age; and after his conversion applied himself to the study of the holy scriptures with such success, that, as we are told by Jerom, it was hard to say which he excelled in most, what the world calls learning, or the divine science of the Christian religion.

Though the church at this time enjoyed peace, yet the laws against her were unrepealed, and Trajan's edict, which ordered that no Christian, who was once accused should be acquitted, without renouncing his faith, and though it was suspended and in a manner abolished by Antoninus Pius, as it was not repeated it was still in force, Antoninus Philosophus, had also after his deliverance by the

the prayers of the Christians ordered, that they should not be accused on account of their religion alone, and that the malicious accusers should be punished with death, yet he left the former decree in its full force, against the accused as appears by his letter to the governor of Lyons which was after his deliverance, in which he orders, the Christians to be put to death, unless they recanted, though no crime was laid to their charge but their religion. Thus under a prince who was greatly esteemed and applauded for wisdom among the Pagans their was a contradictory kind of justice established; the informer was to die for calumny; and the calumniated person was not to escape with life.

This was the case with Apollonius and his accuser, who was one of his own slaves called Severus, who out of malice or in hope of his freedom, or some reward informed against his master, for being a Christian. Appollonius was apprehended, and brought before Perennis the favourite of Commodus, and Præfect, who exercised the sovereign authority as he himself thought fitting. He received the information and according to the rescript of Antoninus, first condemned the informer, to have his legs broke, and then to be executed. After which he earnestly exhorted Apollonius to renounce his faith, and not to be the cause of his own ruin; but finding all his persuasions in vain, and that he adhered firm to his christian profession; as he was a senator, he referred his cause to the senate and to the judgment of his Peers. Accordingly Appollonius appeared in a full house, where he made a learned and eloquent apology for the Christians: but refusing to renounce the faith, he was according to Trajan's law condemned to be beheaded. Which sentence was put in execution on the 18th day of April, A. D. 186.

VINCENTIUS, EUSEBIUS, &c. Martyrs.

THE acts and monuments mentions, also Vincentius, Eusebius, Peregrinus and Potentianus, all learned men, and diligently instructors of the people in the doctrines of Christianity, who for persuading them against the worship of idols and the many follies which Commodus had run into, styling himself Hercules, and ordering all men to pay adoration to that deity, which these holy men refusing, and persuading the people also to leave these follies, and to worship the true God. And having, among others, converted to the faith, one Julius, a senator of Rome, which being told to the emperor they were by his order apprehended and brought before Vitellus, the præfect or captain of the guard, who commanded them to sacrifice to Hercules, which they refusing, they were first cruelly tormented, and then pressed to death by leaden weights.

JULIUS, the Senator, Martyr.

AS to their convert Julius, he making open confession, not only believing, but being also ready to suffer for the faith of Christ; the emperor hearing thereof sent for him; and upon his coming to him, spake to him after this manner, "What madness Julius has possessed thee to forsake the antient religion of your ancestors, who acknowledged Jupiter and Hercules for their gods, while you embrace this new mode of worship among the Christians." In answer to which Julius made a full open confession of his faith; affirming, that

that the Roman deities were false idols ; and that the worshippers of them would be punished with everlasting damnation.

The emperor hearing how Julius despised his gods, and condemned their worshippers, was greatly enraged, and committed him to the care of Vitellius, a cruel and fierce man, to be obliged by him either to sacrifice to Hercules, or upon refusing the same to be put to death.

Vitellius endeavoured to persuade Julius to obey the emperor's command, and to worship the Heathen deities ; alledging, that the Roman empire was not only at the first constituted, but still preserved and maintained by them. Julius, on the other hand, as strenuously refused to obey, and admonished Vitellius, in the same manner, to worship the true God, and to obey his commandments ; lest he, together with his master, should be punished with a violent death here, and with eternal punishment hereafter. This enraged Vitellius so much, that he ordered him to be beat to death with cudgels. He suffered in the latter end of the reign of Commodus, and about the year 190.

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THE

Fifth general Persecution,

began A. D. 197.

UPON the death of Commodus, in the year 191, he was succeeded by Pertinax, whose reign was but short, and his successors Julianus much shorter; for A. D. 192, Severus was proclaimed emperor, who in the beginning of his reign, was very favourable to Christianity. He had been recovered from a fit of sickness by the prayers of one Proculus Torpacio, a Christian, who anointed him with oil, according to the apostle's direction, James v. 2. He was so sensible of this benefit, that he kept Proculus in his palace till he died; and when some persons of quality at Rome were accused for being Christians, he not only acquitted, but applauded them, and openly checked the rashness of the people against them.

His son Caracalla was nursed by a Christian woman; and the behaviour of the Christians towards himself was a great inducement to him to be favourable to them; for in none of his wars, neither with Albinus nor Niger, did they join with either of the competitors against him, but left those busy spirits to struggle for the empire among themselves, minding only the affairs of another life. But notwithstanding the emperor thus favoured them, yet the people's fury prevailed, especially in his absence from Rome.

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And now, after a peace of seventeen years, the church again fell under persecution, which was continued for five years before it received any countenance from the emperor. The Christians being prosecuted by the former laws of the empire, which not only forbid the practice of all religions not approved of by the senate, but also all societies, that were not established by the imperial authority.

The great progress Christianity had made, the infinite number of believers, and the many miracles still performed by them, gave jealousy to their Pagan adversaries, who loaded them with all kinds of calumnies, and used all possible means to suppress them, upon a supposition that they brought all public misfortunes upon them. Upon public festivals, they sometimes tore their bodies out of their graves, and cut them in pieces. Many suffered by fire, sword, and wild beasts; others, after cruel scourgings, and other torments, died in prison, and all without either complaint or resistance, and with joy and thankfulness for being permitted to glorify their Master by their sufferings.

Though there were many martyrs in the beginning of this persecution, yet we have no particular account of any, till after the year 200.

Thus having given an account of the principal martyrs for the two first-ages of Christianity, thro' four persecutions, and into the fifth, in which the church of God daily increased and became more and more triumphant in spite of all the rage and malice of men or hell against it; though afflicted with persecution without, and wounded with heretics within herself, yet it still stood firm and impregnable as a rock, gathered strength, increased, shined, and became the wonder and surprise of the universe.

End of the second Century.

The Third Century.

THE Christian religion had by this time diffused itself, though all parts of the known world; and Christians were now in the cities, towns and villages, in the camp, in the senate, in the palace, and in all places except the Pagan temples; and that in such numbers that Tertullian who lived in this age, has informed us, that if they had unanimously retired to any other country, the empire would have become a mere desert; while all the cruelties of the Gentiles, were but a stronger inducement to others, to encrease their party; the oftener they were cut down, the faster they grew up, and their blood was the seed which produced a plentiful harvest.

In the first year of this Century, Victor bishop of Rome, is by many said to have suffered martyrdom, but by what means is not related. The emperor having been some time in the East, came at length to Palestine, A. D. 202, where he published an edict, forbidding all persons under the severest penalties, to turn either Jew or Christian: this revived and encreased the persecution, which now raged more than ever. The governors of provinces and the bigotted people being now let loose, such severities and cruelties were practised, in most parts, that the Christians of those days did believe, that the times of Anti-christ then took place.

The chief accusations against the Christians, though entirely false and groundless were, that they endeavoured to raise tumults and seditions in the state, that they were guilty of sacrilege and murders, of incestuous pollutions and libidinous commixtures. That they worshipped the head of an As; and from their early meetings in the mornings

ings to adore their God, they were charged with worshipping the sun; but the greatest crime objected against them was, their refusing to worship the heathen Idols, which was the principal cause of the persecution, which raged most in Africa, Cappadocia, Alexandria, and Carthage.

The emperor going into Egypt, caused the persecution to rage greatly in Alexandria, to which place the most select champions for the faith were brought from all parts of Egypt and of Thebais; as to the most noble stage of the almighty, to suffer all sort of torments and deaths; and to be encircled with crowns of immortal bliss.

Among whom, the first that we meet with is Leonides the father of Origen, who was beheaded; being encouraged by his son, who wrote to him upon that head, making use of this remarkable passage, "Take heed, sir, that your care for us does not make you change your resolution." Many of Origen's hearers were also taken, and suffered martyrdom, as Plutarchus and Serenus his brother, who were burned; Heraclides, Heron, and another Serenns, all three beheaded; Rhais, and Potamiena, who were tormented by having boiling pitch poured on their heads, and then burnt; Marcella, the mother of the latter, suffering also with them. Potamiena who was very beautiful was committed to the charge of one Basilides, a captain in the army, to see the execution performed; Basilides receiving her from the judge, and leading her to the place of execution, shewed some compassion upon her, repressing the tumult of the mob, and forbidding their scandalous revilings; upon which account, Potamiena to requite his kindness, bid him be of good cheer, for that she would pray to the Lord, to shew mercy upon him, after which she went to her martyrdom, which she boldly and patiently endured. And Basilides, seeing her constancy and courage in her sufferings; and

hearing of her fervent prayers became himself converted to the faith. And, being shortly after required to make oath on the behalf of his soldiers, he refused it, saying, that he was a Christian and could not swear by the heathen deities ; many who heard him, were at the first greatly surprized, and doubted the truth of what he had said, but he constantly affirming it, they had him before the magistrate, who committed him to prison. Here the Christians went to him, desiring to know the manner and cause of his conversion, to whom he replied, that Potamiena having prayed for him to the Lord, he saw as it were a crown put upon his head, adding, that it would not be long before he should be received, and accordingly the next day he was beheaded, the brethren having baptized him the day before.

I R E N Æ U S Bishop of Lyons, A. D. 202.

HE was probably a native of Greece, and born towards the close of Adrian's reign, who died in the year 138. He received all the advantages of human learning, and was instructed in the principles of the Christian faith, under Papias and Polycarp, both scholars to the evangelist St. John, to the latter of which eminent bishop's memory he paid a very particular deference, observing all his rules with the most strict exactness, declaring to his own disciples, that what he delivered to them, he had received from his own master and others, who had seen and conversed with Christ while on earth. As he found that an acquaintance with the Heathen mythology was ab-

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solutely necessary for one who intended to become a champion for the gospel against the idolatrous Heathens, or Heresies in the church, which were derived from the philosophy of that age; for this reason he applied himself to profane learning, and acquired a perfect knowledge of the writings and compositions of the antient poets, was well versed in history, and in the discipline of the church.

After having spent his youth in the apostolical school, he was sent by Polycarp into Gaul, where many Greeks at that time resided, but at what time, or for what occasion he came thither, is wholly uncertain. Here he assisted the aged bishop Pothinus, in defending the church from those pernicious heresies, which then began to disturb the same, and by which it was in danger of being over-run.

It is indeed supposed that Lyons, being a city of great trade, some of its merchants being converted by Polycarp, they might desire him to send some able person along with them, to propagate the gospel in their country, which might induce him to send first Pothinus, and then Irenæus, to assist him; for it is very certain that he resided in that city several years, to assist the bishop thereof, till towards the end of the reign of Antoninus-Philosophus, when a violent persecution raged in all places, and especially in that city, whereof we have before given an account.

He was at the time when those holy martyrs suffered, chosen by the Christians at Lyons, to carry the account thereof to Eleutherius, bishop of Rome, which is by several eminent writers thought to have been the work of his pen. The church at the same time recommended him highly to Eleutherius, “desiring him to receive him not only as a brother and companion, but as a zealous professor and champion of that religion which Christ confirmed by his blood.”

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At his return to Lyons, he was made bishop of that city in the room of the martyr Pothinus. To this station he succeeded in a very troublesome and tempestuous time ; but he being a wise and skilful pilot, steered his ship through the storm with a prudent conduct ; God at the same time giving such efficacy to his discourses, that he brought almost the whole city to obey the gospel. And we are farther told, that he wrought several miracles for the conversion of Infidels, which is not at all unlikely, as he himself tells us that miracles were frequent in his time.

Nor was the zeal of Irenæus confined to the limits of his own church, but was vigorous in his opposition to all attempts of the Heretics to corrupt the faith of Christ.

To this end, about the year 187, he wrote his famous tract against heresies, which he divided into five parts. In the first part, he display'd the wild notions of all the heretics from Simon Magus to his own time, particularly the Valentinians and Marcosians. In the second, he confuted all their principles by arguments drawn from reason and common sense. In the third, by the writings of the apostles. In the fourth, by the words of our Saviour. And, in the last, he explained several passages of St. Paul, which they had mistaken and abused. In all which he has shewed variety of sacred and profane learning, and no less skill in interpreting the scriptures, recording many things in writing, which the disciples of the apostles had taught only by word of mouth.

We have no farther account of Irenæus, till the year 196, when the controversy about the time of keeping of Easter was revived, by Victor the successor to Eleutherius in the see of Rome, who being of an hot and fiery temper, impatient of controul, endeavoured, to impose the Roman custom

custom of keeping Easter, on all the eastern churches, who observed the time of the Jewish Passover, for that feast, let it fall on what day of the week it would, while the Romans and the western churches kept the Sunday following. And as the eastern prelates refused to yeild, or to change their antient custom, for which they pleaded the examples of St. John and others of the apostles: for this, he thundered out a sentence of excommunication against them, which they but little regarded. This however occasioned many to reprove the pope sharply; and to caution him to have more regard for the peace of the church, and the unity of Christians. One of the most considerable of these, was Irenæus, who wrote him a synodical epistle, in the name of the gallic churches and bishops, signifying to him "That though in the main they agreed with him about this controversy; yet they thought proper to admonish him, how he excommunicated whole churches, for observing their antient customs; shewing the various opinions and mutual charity of their ancestors in this matter. He wrote also to several other bishops, on the same subject, endeavouring all that was in his power, to preserve the peace of the church.

In the fifth persecution under Severus, which raged in all parts of the empire, and as fierce at Lyons, where Severus had formerly been governor, as in any part of the empire whatever, where Irenæus the bishop was a shining light in the church, for which cause he was soon pointed out by the persecutors, and after several previous torments was put to death; being as some say beheaded; together with the generality of the Christians in that great and opulent city; upon which occasion, Gregory of Tours tells us, that the Streets of Lyons ran with blood; which happened in the latter end of the year 202.

Irenæus,

Irenæus, had been upwards of 24 years bishop of Lyons, being a person whose profound learning was accompanied with great prudence, humility and charity, so that he wanted no necessary qualification of a good Christian, an accomplished bishop, and an able writer. He was a true lover of God, and the souls of men, thinking no dangers or difficulties great, to promote the glory of the one, and the happiness of the other; this made him without any regret quit his own country, and fix among a people of a wild and savage temper, who required to be civilized before they could become Christians. For this purpose, as well as for the disputes with the heretics, he was eminently fitted by the quickness of his parts, and the great learning he had acquired in his youth. What was his particular stile and manner of writing, is at this time hard to say, as the originals of his works are generally wanting, but however, his discourses were grave and well digested, and as far as his argument would permit, perspicuous and clear, all filled with great zeal, and a spirit truly prepared for martyrdom. He was very careful and diligent, to have his books committed without any corruption to posterity, as is plain by the following attestation, which he has added to one of them. "Whoever you are that shall transcribe this book, I adjure you by our Lord Jesus Christ, and by his glorious coming to judgement, to compare, and diligently to correct what you transcribe by the copy whence you transcribe it, and annex this adjuration thereto.

Had other antient writers of the church, been treated with such care and reverence, more of those antient books, might have come down to our times or at least those few which we have, would have been more pure and compleat. Though notwithstanding all the care of Irenæus we have no more of his works extant than his book against heresies, though

though he wrote several other pieces. He as well as Justin martyr is taxed with some heterodox opinions, and one peculiar to himself, viz. His affirming of our Lord to have been near 50 years old at the time of his ministry, which he founded upon the expression of the Jews, "Thou art not yet 50 years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Though he was generally clear and perspicuous in his writings, yet he was not altogether free from that failing common among all the antient writers, the darkening the most solemn truths, by arguments not altogether conclusive."

PERPETUA and FELICITAS, &c. Martyrs, A. D. 205.

THIS persecution reaching even to Africa, Carthage was not without her share of the severity of Severus against the Christians. Minutius Firmianus, the proconsul of Africa, ordered four young Catechumens, at Carthage to be seized, whose names were Revocatus and Felicitas, two young slaves belonging to one master, and Saturninus and Secundulus, together with Perpetua a young married lady of noble parentage, and about the age of two and twenty. As there is no mention made of her husband we may reasonably conclude, that if he was then alive he was a Christian, or, at least that he had no aversion to the faith. It is highly probable too, that her mother was the same, from her saying in her account of her sufferings, that her father was the only person, who would not rejoice at her martyrdom. When she was apprehended she had a young child at her breast; Felicitas was also a married woman, and big with child. To those we may add a sixth who shared the

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the same fate with them ; he was named Satur, or Satyrus, and is generally believed to have been the brother of Saturninus.

They were not committed to prison as soon as they were seized, but were kept some time under a proper guard in a private house. While they were under this confinement, the father of Perpetua full of concern for his daughter, whom he tenderly loved, came to her. All his tenderness and affection, were employed to deprive her of the glory which she had in view. But this holy woman well understood what duty she owed to God and to her father, and answered all his importunities on this subject with a courage and constancy becoming a Christian, without any violation of the respect due to a parent. She owned herself a disciple of Jesus Christ and assured him that nothing should make her change her resolution, nor forego her religion, this so far enraged her father that with the fury of a bigot to superstition and idolatry he set upon her, and beat her, but this being to no purpose he left the place full of grief and confusion for his ill success. He did not return to make her a visit for several days, which gave her and her companions an opportunity of receiving the sacrament, of baptism, which they had not before done, being only Catechumens : their principal request to God, was for courage and patience in the ensuing conflict.

Thus fortified against the storm they were carried before the proconsul Minutius, who pressed them to obey the emperor's command, and to sacrifice to the Gods. Satur took upon him to return an answer for the whole company, and declared their fixed resolution of never complying with a demand so dishonourable to their profession, and injurious to the divine being they worshipped. Upon this refusal they were conducted to a prison that lay a little out of the town, and put into a dungeon,

geon, the darkness of which spread an horror over the mind of Perpetua, as she herself acknowledged, but produced no alteration in her face and courage. What gave her the greatest concern in this her affliction was, that her child was taken away from her breast. However, Tertius and Pomponius, two deacons, who had the care of the suffering Christians, procured them the liberty of breathing a free air some hours every day. Perpetua was very glad of this relaxation, as it gave her an opportunity of suckling her child, whom she found had been much neglected. And foreseeing that she should not be long in a capacity of taking care of her infant, she recommended it very strongly to her mother, who came to see her at that time; and though she could not but be sensibly afflicted at hers and her brother's grief for what she endured, yet she spent the favourable moments she was allowed with them, in comforting and strengthening them against the worst; and to use her own words, She looked upon her prison as a palace.

Upon the report of their being brought to their trial, Perpetua's father paid her another visit in the prison, when, full of paternal affection and sorrow, he conjured her in the most moving terms, to have compassion on his grey hairs, begged her to consider the affliction of her family, more especially the condition of her own helpless infant, whose life depended on hers: all which was accompanied with every action that could express concern or tenderness for his daughter: he kissed her, fell at her feet, and shed a flood of tears. Perpetua felt his grief, and if any thing could have softened her into an act of apostacy, it was this tender meeting; but as she had learned from the gospel, that she was to leave every thing, to renounce the most tender sentiments of nature, when they stood in competition with her duty

to God ; she was proof against all the attacks of a parent's prayers or tears : all she could say to comfort him was, " that God's will must be done with me, as we are all at his disposal, and not our own."

The next day an order was brought to the prison for them to appear to their trial ; accordingly they were hurried before Hillarian the procurator in the stead of Felix. The news of their trial, brought great crouds of Spectators to the place, both to see and to hear the prisoners. The prisoners were placed on a scaffold, and exposed to the view of the beholders : when they were all set before him, the judge commanded them in the emperor's name to offer sacrifice to the gods ; to which Satur replied, That it was better to offer to the true God than to idols. He then asked him, Whether that was his private opinion only, or the sense of the whole company ? The martyr answered, That he spake for the whole ; for, upon this occasion, they had but one mind ; which was confirmed by all the rest.

The porcurator then applied himself to Felicitas, and observing her big with child, desired her to have some regard to her own condition ; using several expressions of pity and tenderness in hopes to gain her. She replied, That all he could say or do should never prevail with her to commit idolatry.

Perpetua was the next, who was to give a glorious proof of the strength of religious courage, in a sex naturally timorous, and all her relations were to be witnesses of her inflexible constancy. Her father appeared just as she was called upon, and begged of her once more to have some compassion on his age, and on her tender infant, which he had in his arms. The judge observing this made no impression on her mind, advised her

to consider her fathers tears, and to preserve his life, her own, and her infants, by complying with what was required of her. But she triumphed over all the softer sentiments of nature, and was deaf to every thing that tended to persuade her from persevering in the glorious cause of martyrdom. He then proceeded with the usual interrogatories, to which she answered as became a Christian, and a person prepared for death. Her father perceiving her on the point of being condemned in the transport of his passion, forgot all respect to those laws which he had so lately recommended to his daughter, laid hold on her, and attempted to carry her off; upon which the judge ordered him to be dismissed the court; and upon his resistance, he received a blow from one of the officers. His daughter upon that, to shew that she had not lost all natural sentiments of duty and affection, but had only taught them to submit to a superior duty, declared that she felt that blow as if she had received it herself.

Hillarian, finding his time and pains thrown away upon these illustrious martyrs, sentenced them to be devoured by the beasts, and ordered them back to their prison, till the day for the public sports, which was intended for the day of their deaths; they returned with joy, and waited for the time with impatience.

Perpetua, who was used to suckle her child in prison, sent Pomponius the deacon to her father for it. He knew the tenderness of a parent, and therefore refused to send it, hoping that her concern for her child, might work upon her to obey the emperor's orders; but nothing could move her, and her constancy was rewarded by the child's being satisfied without the breast, and giving her no farther uneasiness.

The joy of these holy persons at the approach of the wished for day, was in part allayed by their being obliged to leave Felicitas behind them. She was but eight months gone with child, and the Roman laws did not admit of the execution of any woman in such circumstances. She herself was sensibly afflicted on the account of this delay; but the Almighty heard hers, and her companions prayers, and granted their petitions, giving her a deliverance from her burden in the prison before the time appointed for the execution. Her pains were very violent, and one of her keepers hearing her cry out under them, said to her, "If you complain now, what will you do when you come to suffer the execution of your sentence?" To which she replied, "It is I alone who bare this pain, but then one within me will suffer for me, because I shall suffer for him." She was delivered of a girl, which a Christian woman took care of, and brought up as her own.

The miracles which the Almighty frequently performed in favour of his faithful servants, were by the Heathens either mistaken or misrepresented, and looked upon as the effects of some magic power. The tribune was imposed on in this manner, and made to suspect that his prisoners would attempt their escape by some such means. Upon this he thought it necessary to use them more severely, and to forbid their friends from seeing or assisting them as before. Upon which Perpetua told him, "He was mistaken in his conduct; for that as they were designed to grace Cæsar's feast, he ought to take care that they were well kept in the mean time, that they might appear worthy of that great solemnity." This raillery gave the tribune no small confusion, and procured them better treatment. He gave orders for their being used with more civility, allowed them the satisfaction of seeing their friends, and receiving such assist-

assistance as they brought them. Nor did his humanity lose its reward, for the grace of God, made their patience and virtue the happy occasion of his conversion to Christianity.

On the day before their suffering, they were entertained in publick with what the Romans called a free supper, which was the last meal criminals were allowed to eat before they were executed; this gave them an opportunity of speaking to the people, of the terrors of the last judgment, and of the advantages they were secure of enjoying on the next day. The courage with which they delivered themselves on this occasion, so amazed the people who were drawn together out of curiosity, that many of them were converted to the faith.

On the long expected day, the martyrs went to the amphitheatre with joy and serenity in their countenances, that shewed where their hopes were placed; it was but three days since Felicitas was delivered; but God who designed her the comfort of laying down her life with her companions, gave her strength to bear what remained. As the publick sports of the Heathens were generally exhibited in honour of some of their false deities, and their very diversions mixed with idolatry and superstition; it was usual for them, upon such occasions to wear a particular dress, as a mark of their devotion to the god whom they would be supposed to honour. The officers who attended the execution, would have obliged these martyrs, to have received those superstitious habits, which they boldly refused to do, saying that they came there to preserve their liberty; which to them was preferable to their lives, which latter, they would freely sacrifice rather than comply with any thing unbecoming Christians. Upon which they were excused that ceremony, and conducted to the Amphitheatre.

Here Revocatus, Satur and Saturninus were bold enough to denounce the judgment of God against the wicked spectators, and addressing themselves to Hillarian, let him know his danger in the next world, for what was now about to be executed by his order and direction. The people enraged at this boldness, called out for them to be whipped by the hunters, who were those that had the care of the beasts, or were to fight with them armed. Their demand was complied with, and the hunters being ranged in a single line, they were obliged to undergo the punishment of the guntlope, every one giving them a lash, as they passed naked before them, while they rejoiced and thought themselves happy in their sufferings for the sake of Christ.

As martyrdom was their desire, so it had been for some time the subject of their discourse, with each other, while under their confinement; and as it is natural upon such occasions, every one mentioned what death he should chuse to suffer. Saturninus and Revocatus, wished their lot might be to be exposed to beasts of all sorts, that so they might suffer the more for the sake of Christ. Accordingly those two were first attacked by a leopard, then by a bear, and though both wounded them, yet they did not kill them. Satur had expressed a natural aversion to a bear, and declared his choice to be, to fall into the claws of a leopard; a wild boar was let loose upon him, which only dragged him about the scaffold, without doing him any considerable damage. He was then posted on a narrow bridge, where a bear was to pass; but Pudens the converted keeper had taken care to lay some carrion at hand, the smell of which so attracted the bear, that he could not be got forward.

Secundulus died in prison. As to Perpetua and Felicitas, they were stript in order to be thrown
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to a mad bull, but the spectators having some little regard to decency, they were admitted to put on their loose gowns. Perpetua felt the first attack, which stunned her; but as soon as she was come a little to herself, she observed that her gown was torn, and regarding decency more than pain, she wrapped it about her in the best manner that she could. She got up and perceiving Felicitas on the ground, and very much bruised; she gave her her hand, and helped her up in the best manner that she was able; then they walked together to the gate called Sanavivaria, where Perpetua found her brother and Rusticus a Catechumen, whom she exhorted to continue firm in the faith; to love one another, and not to be discouraged, but rather to take example by her sufferings.

Satur was employed in the same pious office at another door, and observing to Pudens, how every thing had happened according to his desire, added, "Now you shall see the affair conclude, according to my wishes, and me dispatched at once by a leopard." This was in part fulfilled, for at the conclusion of the shew, he was thrown to a leopard, which wounded him so much at one bite, that he was covered with blood. The Pagans who had heard the martyrs say, that they were going to a second baptism, cried out in ridicule thereof, that he was well washed.

Satur, with much difficulty, got up and reached the Spoliarium, or place where those were dispatched whom the beasts had left alive.

As he went along, he saw Pudens, and bid him remember his constancy, and to take courage by what he saw him suffer for the faith. He desired the keeper's ring, which he dipped in his blood, and returned to him again, as a memorial of his own martyrdom, and an encouragement to that convert, who might one day be exposed to the

the same trial : and when he had done this he expired.

The remaining martyrs were carried to the Spoliarium to be slain there, according to custom : but the people who delighted in spilling of Christian blood, thinking they could not all enjoy the pleasure of seeing them die there, demanded that they might be brought into the middle of the amphitheatre. Upon which the martyrs embraced each other, and as well as they could, walked thither of their own accord, when the people were soon satisfied. Revocatus, Saturninus, and Felicitas, received the decisive blow, without any emotion, but Perpetua falling into the hands of a fresh and bungling executioner, was not so immediately dispatched, and suffered more in her last moments.

These all suffered March the 8th, A. D. 205.

Perpetua is said to have been blessed with several heavenly visions, during her confinement, both for her own and her fellow-prisoner's comfort, which are related in the acts of Perpetua and Felicitas, but they seem to be so much like Monkish tales, that I doubt their authenticity, and suspect them to be of a later date, and therefore hope the reader will excuse my not relating them.

Other sufferers in this persecution in Africa, were Speratus, and twelve others, called by the name of Scillitain's, in all likelihood from the place of their habitation, who after a considerable dialogue with the governor, and a courageous declaration of their faith, they were all condemned to be beheaded.

Andoclus a zealous Christian, whom Polycarp had sent into France, where he employed himself in

in spreading the gospel, was apprehended and beat nearly to death, with clubs and staves, and afterwards beheaded.

Asclepiades who though he was not put to death, yet endured many and great sufferings for the sake of the gospel, constantly abiding by the truth of his religion, and underwent the trial of confession : how he was released we know not, and as we have no account of his death, we may suppose that it was natural, he was after his sufferings made bishop of Antioch, in which see he sat seven years.

Nor must Alexander, nor Narcissus, joint bishops of Jerusalem be forgot, of whom the first was a worthy bishop of Cappadocia, and being brought to the confession of his faith, suffered many cruel torments from the Pagans, after which as is recorded he was admonished by a vision in the night, to go to Jerusalem, which then remained free from persecution ; a little before his arrival at that city, some of the heads of the church there received also an intimation in plain words to go to the gate of the city, and meet their bishop who was coming in, being sent from God. They did as they were commanded, and there met Alexander whom they joined in the Episcopal office, with Narcissus, then 116 years of age. A. D. 212. He afterwards suffered under Decius, of which more hereafter.

About the year 200, Narcissus bishop of Jerusalem, a person celebrated for his piety, and leading a most strict and exemplary life, some profligate persons, fearing lest they should be censured by him for their crimes, by the way of prevention accused the bishop of incontinency, adding both oaths and imprecations, to confirm their accusation : the first wished to be consumed by fire ; the second to be wasted by Leprosy, or some sore disease ; and the

the third to loose his sight, if their allegations were not true; but seeing they were men of very ill morals, and of base character, and the bishop having lived all his life blameless, the faithful would not believe them. But Narcissus unable to endure the scandal, and being inclinable to a philosophical life, retired from his church and lived for seven years in solitude, when, the almighty would not suffer the wickedness of his accusers to go unpunished, but rewarded them each according to his desire, for the first, had his house burnt together with himself and his whole family, the second, was afflicted with a sore disease, and died miserably, and the third, seeing the fate of his two companions, and fearing the just vengeance of Heaven on himself; confessed his treason, and by daily pining and continual weeping for his fault lost his eyesight, and became a miserable instance of the just judgment of God on such impious wretches. Narcissus in the time of his third successor Gordius, returned again into the city, and was prevailed upon by the Christians, to re-assume the government of the church, which he held for several years, ill worn out with age, he was joined by Alexander, soon after which he died in peace A. D. 215.

A. D. 211, Severus dying and his successor Caracalla being altogether immersed in lusts, and other vices, forgot the Christians, so that the persecution ceased, and the church enjoyed a peace, with some little interruption for several years.

But notwithstanding this peace of the church, during the reigns of Caracalla, Macrinus, Elagabalus, and Alexander Severus, we are not to suppose that there were none who suffered for the sake of their religion, for during this interval, though there was no general persecution, yet there were several eminent Christians suffered for the sake of Christ.

Cecilia, Valerian, and Tiburtius.

About the year 222, in the latter end of the reign of Elagabalus, or the beginning of Alexander Severus, Cecilia, a young lady of good family in Rome, educated in the principles of the Christian religion, who was by her parents, contrary to her own inclination, obliged to marry Valerian, a young gentleman of birth and fortune, equal to her own; he was so far prevailed on by her, that he renounced his idolatry, and became a Christian, before the celebration of their nuptials, and allowed his intended spouse to persevere in her resolution of perpetual chastity.

Valerian's conversion was followed by that of his brother Tiburtius, which drew the anger of the civil magistrate upon them, and they were soon after their baptism, both of them called to make a public confession of the faith they had embraced. They were both accused of being Christians, and were sentenced to lose their heads.

Maximus the officer who led them to execution, was so much affected with their behaviour in their last moments, and the intrepidity with which they received the stroke, that he declared himself of the same religion, he was immediately carried before the magistrate, allowed the formality of a trial, and sentenced to the same fate. Cecilia comforted her husband and brother during their sufferings; exhorting them to continue constant therein and to die as became true Christians, for the sake of their redeemer: after their deaths, she herself was apprehended, and had before the magistrate to do sacrifice, which she refusing, was condemned. As she was before the magistrate the officers who were about her, beholding her comely countenance, and hearing her prudent conversation began to solicit her to save herself, but she answered them with such force of reason and godly exhortations, that their hearts began to relent

lent and to yield to that religion which they had before persecuted.

Cecilia, perceiving this, sent for Urban, then bishop of Rome, to her house, whither she was admitted to return, to establish them in the faith, when they were there baptized with several others, among whom was one Gordianus a nobleman. This ceremony being performed, she was again taken to the judge, and condemned. She was then put into a bath of scalding water, where she continued for a considerable time unhurt, some say for a whole day; after which she was ordered to be beheaded in the bath; the executioner made three or four strokes before he severed her head from her body; after which her body was taken away by the order of Urban, and decently buried.

The precise time of her death is uncertain, but according to the most probable account, it happened, A. D. 222.

CALISTUS, Bishop of Rome, A. D. 224.

HE was of Roman birth, and we may reasonably suppose of Christian education, about the year 219, he succeeded Zephyrinus as bishop of Rome; in his time the church enjoyed some repose under Elagabalus who was too much given to his own debaucheries to trouble himself with any thing else: of this Calistus made the best use that was possible for the benefit of the church, and his successor Alexander was more favourable to the Christians than any of his predecessors in the imperial throne had been, and tho' a professed Pagan yet was a prince truly virtuous, he shewed
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an esteem for the Christian religion, and had the images of Jesus Christ and of Abraham placed in his closet among the rest of his household gods, and tho' he did not believe in Christ, as a redeemer, yet he honoured him as a lawgiver, whose institutions excelled all others; and was particularly fond of this adage, "Do not that to another, which you would not have another do to you." And whenever he punished any one for injustice, he commanded the crier to proclaim this sentence in court, and fixed it up in capitals in all the courts of judicature. He had some thoughts to have built a temple in honour to our Saviour, but was hindered by the heathen priests, who persuaded him that if he did this, all the other temples of the Roman deities would be neglected, and the whole empire would in a little time embrace Christianity: but though he did not build any church himself, yet he would not admit any already built to be destroyed, and once, when a cause was brought before him, against some Christians, who had built a church on a piece of ground, which was claimed by some victualers, he gave it in favour of the Christians, saying, "That it was better God should be worshipped there in any manner, than the place be put to the use which they intended." The greatest part of his family were converted and a perfect tranquillity reigned in the empire.

But notwithstanding Alexander, was thus inclinable to favour the Christians, yet this did not prove a perfect security to them, the standing laws of the empire against all innovations in religion were still in force, and the populace lay under no particular restraint; in that particular, several fell a sacrifice to the blind zeal of the rabble, or the malice of men in power among whom Calistus is reckoned to have been one, and to have died for the faith. A. D. 224. in the beginning of

Alexander Severus, his reign, though as is generally supposed without that emperor's knowledge,

U R B A N, Bishop of Rome, Martyr,
A. D. 232.

C A L I S T U S being Martyred Urban succeeded him in his Bishoprick. He was a native of Rome, the son of Pontianus. As he came to the Empire in the peaceable reign of Alexander, so he well knew how to improve that advantage, for the benefit of the church, and enlarging the kingdom of Christ. Some popular commotions and the perverse dispositions, of particular magistrates, notwithstanding Alexander's good disposition towards the church, gave several Christians an opportunity of glorifying God by their deaths; among whom was Urban who suffered in a persecution raised against the Christians by Turcius Almachius governor of Rome, most probably in the absence of and without the knowledge of the emperor. He suffered with several others, whom he greatly encouraged both by his examples and discourses. He is said to have first instituted confirmation in the church. The time of his death is not certainly known, though the best accounts place it about the year. 232.

At Præneste in Italy, was one Agapetus a boy of about 15 years of age, who refusing to sacrifice to the idols, was afflicted with several kinds of tortures; being first severely scourged with whips, then hanged up by the feet, and had boiling water poured upon him, after which he was cast to the wild beasts, and when none of these torments would hurt him, he was at the last beheaded with a sword, Antiochus

tiochus the officer who superintended the execution, as he was inflicting these torments, suddenly fell down from his judicial seat, crying out, that his bowels burnt within him, and died miserably.

T H E

Sixth General Persecution,

Under the

Emperor M A X I M I N U S, began,
A. D. 235.

M A X I M I N U S being chosen emperor by the soldiers in direct opposition to the senate; He out of his hatred to the house of his predecessor Severus, raised a most terrible persecution, against the church, especially against the teachers and leaders thereof, imagining that if they were once cut off, he might easily reduce the rest. Firmilian says of it that it was not a general but a local persecution, which raged only in some particular places, and especially in the province of Capadocia, where Seremianus the president attempted to drive all the Christians out of those parts where he lived. It is but very few of the martyrs, who suffered in this persecution that we have any knowledge of: among others, we are told of a Christian soldier, who for refusing to wear a laurel crown, which had been given him by the Emperor, urging as a reason for his not doing it, "that he being a Christian could not do it," was publicly accused, stript of all his military ornaments, and most cruelly scourged; after which he was cast
F f 2 into

into prison, hourly expecting Martyrdom. This action is applauded by Tertullian, as a noble instance of zeal and Christian magnanimity.

The principal persons, who suffered in this persecution, were Pontianus the successor to Urban in the see of Rome, who after he had been about 5 years bishop of that city, for his too great liberty, in reproving the idolatry of the people was banished into the Island of Sardinia, where he shortly after was slain.

He was succeeded by Anteros a Grecian, who by his extraordinary care in collecting the acts of the martyrs, so exasperated the government against him, that he was slain, after he had held this dignity about forty days : these two were both of them martyred, A. D. 236.

Calepodius a minister of Rome, whom they first dragged about the streets of Rome, and then fastened a millstone about his neck and threw him into the Tyber.

Pammachius one of the senators, who with his wife and children, and others to the number of forty-two, together with Simplicius another senator, were all beheaded in one day and their heads set upon the city gates, in order to deter others from embracing Christianity.

Quiritus a nobleman of Rome, with his mother Julia and many more, were put to tortures and sundry kinds of death ; among whom was Martina a beautiful and noble virgin, who when neither persuasions, nor torments could prevail with her to renounce her faith, she at last perished by the sword.

Hippolitus a Christian bishop, but of what place we have no certain account, some writers mak-

making him bishop of Ostia near Rome, and others of a city in Arabia, though they do not mention the name of the city; was for the profession of his faith in Christ, tied to a wild horse, and dragged through fields, bushes and stony places, till he expired: And from Prudentius we learn, that during this short persecution, many martyrs were slain, and buried in heaps, 50 or 60 in a pit together, and doubtless many more had been slain, had not the Almighty in compassion to his people, shortened the reign of their persecutor, and taken away the tyrant, A.D. 238.

He was succeeded by Gordian, during whose whole reign the church was free from persecution; as it was also during that of his successor Philip, who is supposed to have been a Christian himself, so that the church enjoyed rest for the space of ten years.

A. D. 249. In this year a severe and violent persecution broke out in Alexandria, without the knowledge of the emperor, occasioned by the instigation of a certain Gentile priest, or magician, who finding the people prone to superstition and idolatry, excited them to revenge the quarrel of their gods upon the Christians. The multitude once raised, ran on with an astonishing fury, accounting their cruelty to the Christians, the greatest instance of the piety to their gods.

In all places they broke open the Christians' houses, carrying off the best of their goods, and burning the rest; and so great was their malice, that a Christian could not stir out, either day or night, but immediately the popular cry was, Up, away with him to the fire.

In this manner they continued, till by sedition among themselves, they fell into contests, and gave the Christians a little breathing-time from the pursuit of their malice and inhumanity.

METRUS, APOLLONIA
and QUINTA, Martyrs, A. D.
249.

IN the first transports of their rage at Alexandria, the mob fell upon Metrus, a very aged man, and a venerable Christian, pressing him in very strong terms to blaspheme his Saviour; and upon his refusal to comply with their demand, they abused him with their sticks and clubs, pricked him in the face and eyes with sharp reeds, and at the last stoned him.

The next that felt their rage was Quinta, a Christian woman, whom they carried to their temple, and would have obliged her to worship the idol. Her refusal so incensed them, that they dragged her about the streets by the feet over sharp flints, dashed her against great stones, scourged her with whips, and at the last, dispatched her in the same manner as they had done Metrus.

Apollonia an antient and celebrated virgin, being apprehended by them, and refusing to comply with their idolatrous worship; they dashed her teeth out with their fists, and then lighting a fire, threatned to burn her alive. Upon which she desired to be untied and to be allowed some little respite; but as soon as she was at liberty, she convinced them that she did not fear death, and of her own accord chearfully leaped into the flames.

T H E

Seventh General Persecution,

Under the

Emperor DECIUS, began A. D. 249.

PHILIP and his Son being slain, Decius, was by the army proclaimed Emperor, and confirmed by the senate. In the beginning of his reign, he raised the most terrible persecution against the Christians, the church had ever felt, the cause of which, according to Eusebius, was, his hatred to his predecessor Philip, whom he deemed a Christian; but it is more probable that it was owing to the great encrease of Christianity, which had diffused itself in all parts, and enlightened every corner of the Empire; not only cities and towns, but also villages. The heathen temples were forsaken, the Pagan altars overthrown, and their sacrifices despised, whilst the churches were thronged, and Christianity triumphant. This great declination of Paganism awakened the malice of Decius, who enraged to see the religion of the Empire trodden under foot, and the worship of the gods in all places neglected, insomuch that he resolved with all possible force to check this growth of Christianity, and to use all methods utterly to extirpate the name of Jesus; and to reduce the people to their antient religion. This resolution being taken he issued out edicts to the governors of the several provinces, commanding them to proceed with the utmost severity against the Christians. Though the encrease of Christianity may be justly deemed the main spring that set to work the enemies of Christ, against his servants, yet the excellent Crispian, with great piety and modesty, finds a c

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nearer themselves, and tells us, that it was the sins of the Christians which provoked God's wrath, and set open the flood-gates of persecution against them; for pride and self-interest, want of charity, divisions, and factions, reigned among them, and the very Martyrs themselves were tainted with the disease, so that it was no wonder that the almighty should send a Thorn in their sides to cure the disorder.

Nothing can be imagined more violent, than the severity of this storm, Rome, Carthage, Alexandria, Neocæsarea, and all parts of the Empire felt its dreadful effects; every heathen was ambitious to promote the imperial decree, and thought it meritorious to bring a Christian to the stake. The Christians were in all places driven from their habitations, spoiled in their estates and tormented in their bodies; racks and prisons, axes and halters, fire and wild beasts, scalding pitch and melted wax, sharp stakes and burning pincers, were but some of the methods of their treatment, and when these were all run over, new-ones were daily invented and executed. Nor did they only vary but repeated their torments, and where one ended another began; they many times tormented them without any hopes of their dying. Some were kept upon the rack, that they might die by piece-meals, to render their pains lingering and without intermission. Accusations were infinite, some came in as informers, others as witnesses, some searched for them in private corners, others seized them who fled, while some who wanted their neighbours estates, took occasion to accuse them of being Christians. All laws both of nature and humanity were trodden under foot; friend betrayed his friend, brother his brother, and children their parents, while every man feared his relatives, and his dearest friend.

By this means the woods, and mountains became full, cities and towns depopulated, and the dens

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and caves of the earth inhabited ; houses, left by their owners, were turned into prisons, there not being room in the common goals to contain the numbers of Christians who were sent thither. Many who fled, met with fresh miseries, being famished with hunger and thirst in the deserts, starved with cold, eat up diseases, surprised by wild beasts ; not a few fell into the hands of the wild Arabs and Saracens, who reduced them to a state of slavery worse than death itself. Another and a greater calamity to all true believers was that many who were weak and unprepared for such a conflict apostatized, or compounded with their persecutors, several of whom were punished by the immediate hand of heaven, and several returned to the church and were restored and established in the faith, but more maintained their station with an unshaken courage, and thousands held out till they gained the prize of eternal glory by their deaths : insomuch that, Nicephorus says, it were easier to count the sand of the sea than to number the martyrs, who fell in this persecution. And as a greater mortification to their persecutors many who had been till now professed enemies to Christ ; on a sudden came in and confessed themselves Christians, to the great confusion of the judges who were amazed and trembled, while the condemned were courageous and chearful, and willing to undergo the severest conflicts for the sake of Christ and to obtain the crown of martyrs.

FABIAN Bishop of Rome and Martyr. A. D. 250.

THE first of note who felt the fury of this storm was Fabian Bishop of Rome; to whom for his integrity and uprightness, the late emperor Philip had committed the care of his treasure: whether Decius upon his mounting the throne found so much as he expected, or not, is not certainly known, tho' this was pretended. However Decius and the rest of the enemies to Christianity, imagining that the flock would be more easily dispersed, when their shepherd was taken away; in the first year of his reign caused this holy bishop to be put to death. But the divine providence disappointed the expectations of the Pagans; the example of his constancy in his sufferings made a great impression on the minds of the faithful, and proved a strong persuasion to martyrdom during the whole persecution.

Fabian was a native of Italy, and elected bishop of Rome A. D. 236. Anteros his predecessor being martyred under Maximinus, the Christians met together, in order to provide a proper pastor for that church in the perillous times of persecution, which was then on foot. Several of eminent characters, and unexceptionable qualifications were proposed, tho' no one thought of Fabian who was then present, he being but newly come out of Italy to settle in Rome, till he was pointed out by heaven to their choice, by a dove coming and settling upon his head, which the congregation looking upon as a token from heaven to direct them, unanaimously chose him for their bishop; in which station he continued 14 years, All we know of him is, that he lived and acted in a manner perfectly

fectly agreeable to what both God and man expected from him ; filled his station with reputation and honour in this world, and concluded an holy life, by a most holy death, on the 20th day of January 250. In what manner he was slain, we are not informed, but as he suffered at Rome it is most likely that he was beheaded.

ABDON and SENNEN, Martyrs, A. D. 250.

THESE two holy personages came out of Persia to Rome towards the middle of the third century, a little before Decius began his reign, who having raised a persecution against the church, these two strangers were among the numbers of the first who were seized, tortured, and at the last for their strict adherence to the faith glorified God by their deaths. After which they were not abandoned like strangers, but the faithful who were united to them in the hopes of a better country, took their bodies and privately deposited them, in the house of Quirinus a subdeacon. It is supposed that they finished their course July the 30th. A. D. 250.

MOYSES, Priest and Martyr. A. D. 251.

AFTER the death of Fabian, Moyses was looked on as the chief ornament of the Roman clergy, nor was Maximus and some others much inferior to him ; they were both priests and did honour

honour to that character, by the sanctity of their lives, their zeal for the glory of Christ and the salvation of mankind. The persecution proved a favourable opportunity for them to display their fidelity and constancy, for which, they were both seized and imprisoned with several others, presently after the death of Fabian; they courageously sustained the first efforts of the enemy, and their behaviour greatly fortified the rest of the Christians in their faith, and inspired them with fixt resolutions of suffering every thing in its defence.

They were for some time confined, without suffering any other punishment, than the loss of their liberty, and the inconveniencies inseparable from a prison; but at length they were more hardly used, and put to many severe trials, and felt the force of variety of torments: several proposals were made for their enlargement, for a whole year together; but as a conformity to the Pagan worship was always one, they all strenuously refused to purchase their liberty at the expence of their faith. However at last, by what means I do not find any where related, these holy men regained their liberty; which Maximus and some others did not make so good use of, as they had done of their chains, but were imposed on by the artful discourses of Novatus, and decoyed into schism. Moyſes stood his ground, and was proof against all their solicitations, and exerted himself vigorously for the unity of the church; declaring he would not hold any communion with Novatus, or his adherents, and was very active in discovering and defeating his artifices. Though now in the absence of Decius, the storm did not rage so violently, as it had done while he was at Rome, yet Moyſes was again seized, and with uncommon courage and constancy, suffered Martyrdom, being, as it is most likely, beheaded within the walls of Rome, towards the close of the year, 251.

JULIAN Martyr, A. D. 251.

ALL that we know of this Martyr, is from Chrysoſtom ; who tells us, that he was a native of Cilicia. The edict for the perſecution of the Chriſtians gave him an opportunity of maintaining the faith, at the expence of his eaſe, his liberty and his life. He fell into the hands of a magiſtrate who abuſed his commiſſion to the exerciſe of the moſt inhuman cruelties on him ; he put his conſtancy to ſeveral ſevere trials, and finding their violence had not the deſired effect, hoped to tire out his patience, by the length of them ; he was kept a conſiderable time in priſon, whence, he was frequently carried before his barbarous judge, ill uſed, and then remanded back to his former confinement ; ſometimes he would remit his ſeverities, and endeavour by ſofter means to gain him. He obliged him for a whole year together, to travel from one town to another, to expoſe him to the ridicule and inſults of the Pagans ; to all which he was invincible, and all the malice of his enemies, were only ſo many more witneſſes of his triumph, for nothing could make him weary or aſhamed of his profeſſion. Finding all their endeavours thus defeated, and that what was deſigned for his confuſion, ended in the glory of God, and the honour of his faithful ſervant, he was brought back to his judge, who enraged at this diſappointment ordered him to be ſtrippt, and whipt, till his bones and entrails appeared ; employing every cruelty upon him, that might ſhake the conſtancy of any who valued life, and eaſe, preferable to a good conſcience ; but Julian, being aſſiſted by God, was an over-match for all the moſt ingenious barbarity they could invent. The magiſtrate highly incenſed to find him proof againſt all his at-

tempts, was now resolved at once to dispatch him, and rid himself of any farther trouble or confusion about him; but ordered him however to be executed in a manner, which still gave him hopes that the martyr would loose all patience, and forfeit the reward due to his former sufferings. By his order he was put into a large leathern bag, with a number of Serpents and Scorpions, along with him, and thus thrown into the sea, where he perished for the faith.

The time of his death is not certainly known, but is generally supposed to have happened at Carthage, A. D. 251. in the persecution under Decius.

PETER and his Companions Martyrs, A. D. 251.

PURSUANT to the Emperors edict, Peter, a young man valuable for the qualities of his mind, as well as for the beauty of his body, was seized at Lampsachus, a town on the Hellespont, and carried before Optimus the proconsul of Asia. Having answered the usual interrogatories and confessed himself a Christian, the proconsul bid him take notice of the imperial orders, and comply with them, by sacrificing to the goddess Venus. To this he replied; "I am surprized that you should endeavour to persuade me to sacrifice to an infamous woman, whose debaucheries are recorded by your own historians, and whose life consisted of such actions, as the laws would severely punish. No, I ought much rather to offer to the true God, and Jesus Christ the acceptable sacrifice of prayers, and of praises." Optimus hearing this ordered him to be stretched on a wheel, and bound down to it with chains, which was done with such violence

lence that his bones were all broke. But his torments seemed to inspire him with fresh courage, and in the midst thereof, he smiled on his persecutors as if he designed to reproach them with the insufficiency of their malice to separate him from his God. Then looking up to heaven, he thanked the Almighty for giving him strength to support his sufferings, and begged a supply of courage and patience sufficient to overcome the tyranny of his enemies: when the proconsul seeing his perseverance ordered him to be beheaded.

Immediately after this persecution, as the proconsul was setting out for Troas, a city in Phrygia, three others namely Andrew, Paul and Nicomachus, were brought before him for professing the faith. He asked whence they came, and what was their religion. Nicomachus more zealous and impatient than the rest, cried out, that he was a Christian, Andrew and Paul, being required to give an account of themselves, said they were of the same faith. The proconsul then turning to Nicomachus, commanded him to sacrifice to the gods, as the emperors edict required; to which he readily answered that a Christian ought not to pay, that respect to devils, which was due to God alone. Upon this declaration he was put upon the rack, and tortured, which he endured with great patience and resolution, 'till he seemed ready to expire: and then forfeited all the advantages of his sufferings by abjuring his faith and offering to sacrifice to the gods. The proconsul ordered him to be released immediately, and granted him his life and liberty. But he had scarce given that public proof of his apostacy, but he fell into the most violent agonies, and died on the spot.

There was present at this time, one Denisa a young woman about sixteen years old, who touched with this terrible judgment of God, broke out into this reflection. "O unhappy wretch, why would

you buy a moments ease at the expence of a miserable eternity." Optimus heard her, and calling her to him, asked her if she was a Christian, to which she replied: "Yes, I am; and therefore pity the poor man who could not hold out but one moment longer, when he knew the reward of his sufferings, and had eternal rest before him." To which the proconsul giving a turn to the apostates dreadful end said, "He has truly found rest, for having discharged his duty to the gods and the emperor, the great goddesses Venus and Diana, have taken him out of the world, that he should not be exposed to the insults and reproach of Christians." And having spoke this, he commanded Denisa to sacrifice according to the emperor's decree, assuring her, that her disobedience should be punished with the utmost severity. To which she assured him, that the God she served was more powerful than he, and therefore she feared not his threats, nor would she obey his commands; upon which he delivered her into the hands of two young libertines to be debauched; and ordered Andrew and Paul back to prison. The young men took Denisa to their own lodgings with them, resolving to satisfy their brutal passion in its utmost extent. But through the protection of God, all their attempts were defeated and the Virgin preserved till midnight unstained; when the Libertines were surprized by a vision, which so shocked and amazed them, with the glory in which it appeared, that they fell at the virgin's feet, humbly requesting that she would employ her charitable prayers, in their favour, that they might not feel the hand of divine justice for their crime.

The next morning the populace in great crouds beset the proconsul's house, requiring that Andrew and Paul should be delivered into their hands; having been set on by two priests of Diana. The proconsul sent for the two Martyrs, and ordered them
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to sacrifice to the great goddess Diana ; but they told him they knew not any such deity, nor had they ever given divine honours to any, but to God alone. This declaration so incensed the people, that they begged the proconsul would deliver them up to their discretion, and they would vindicate the honour of their gods. However the judge willing to make a farther trial of their constancy, endeavoured to persuade them to idolatry, but finding he could make no impression upon them, ordered them to be first whipt, and then to be delivered to the mob to be stoned to death, who did not delay immediately to put the sentence in execution ; for tying their feet together, they dragged them out of the town in order to stone them.

Denisa hearing what was doing, broke from her keeper, and ran to the place, where the martyrs were suffering, forced her way through the croud, threw herself upon them, and declared she would share the glory and reward of their martyrdom : in the mean time, the proconsul was informed of Denisa's wonderful preservation, and late escape ; upon which, he ordered that she should be taken away, and be beheaded at a distance from Andrew and Paul, which was done accordingly. A. D. 251.

EPIMACHUS, ALEXANDER and others, Martyrs, A. D. 251.

IN this persecution, which raged all over the empire, at Alexandria were two worthy Christians, Epimachus and Alexander : the magistrates of Alexandria were very diligent and active in that city, in searching out the Christians, to put them to death : when these two fell into their hands. and on confessing the name of Jesus at their first examination,

amination, were loaded with chains, committed to prison; and suffered all the hardships of a long confinement, but remaining the same after this severe trial, they were beat with staves, had their sides torn with iron hooks, and their lives ended by fire. Dennis, Bishop of Alexandria, who was an eye-witness of their sufferings, has left us this short account, which is preserved by Eusebius, and in the same piece he tells us also of four glorious female martyrs, who suffered at the same place and on the same day.

Ammonarium a virgin of an irreproachable life stands the first in that glorious list. Her judge employed all the arts both of blandishment and of cruelty in his power, to draw something from her in favour of Paganism, and to the dishonour of Christianity, but failing in all his attempts, and the virgin assuring him that he should never prevail with her, to drop the least word of that sort, she was at his command led to execution, but the manner of her death is not mentioned. The second was named Mercuria, a person venerable for her age and virtue; the third Dyonisia, who tho' a tender mother of many children, yet she preferred God to that, and all other human considerations; the fourth was of the same name as the first. The judge tired out with the constancy and courage of the first Ammonarium, and supposing that the three others now before him, would in all probability give him as much trouble, pronounced sentence upon them, and they were immediately beheaded.

LUCIAN and MARCIAN, Martyrs, A. D. 121.

THESE two martyrs, were brought up in all the errors of Paganism, and gave into all the extravagancies of that religion, living in the open profession and practice of magic, which they employed either to execute their revenge and malice on their neighbours, or to engage the affections of virtuous women towards them. These libertines, having conceived a violent passion for a young lady of strict virtue, practiced every art to corrupt her mind, and to prevail with her to gratify their vicious inclinations; but all their attempts proved unsuccessful upon a virgin, who by her constant prayer destroyed all the force of their charms. In vain they employed their charms, in vain invoked their infernal deities, who were forced at the last to confess, they had no power over such as acknowledged the true God, and were under the protection of Jesus Christ. This declaration shocked these libertines, who now began to conclude, that Christ must be superior to all other powers, and by the assistance of divine grace they pursued this hint, till they saw the absurdity of the Pagan religion, and the beauty of Christianity, and concluded it best to embrace the religion of him, who had thus completely triumphed over their art and the authors of it. The sincerity of their conversion, they demonstrated by burning their books of magic, in the face of the whole town, generally supposed to have been Nicomedia in Bithynia; and declaring publickly, that for the future they neither knew, nor hoped in any being, but that God, who had convinced them of their former folly and impiety.

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Having made this confession, they proceeded to the church, gave a full account of what had passed and received baptism: And being now strengthened by the grace of regeneration, they left their fortunes, their friends, and all their expectations in this world, and retired into a private situation, where they passed their time in penitential sorrow for their former life, and were so sensible of their errors, that they employed all their thoughts in correcting them, living only upon bread and water, and spent whole days, frequently without any nourishment at all.

Having spent some time in this solitary retirement, they were at length by the same spirit, which was the cause of their conversion; inspired with the charitable resolution of appearing again in the world, for the instruction of their deluded old acquaintance, in the tenets of the true religion which they had now embraced; their discourses on that head, received no small weight from the consideration of their former opposition, to the religion they now professed with so much zeal. Nothing could have impeded their labours in the gospel, but the persecution now on foot; in consequence of which, these two zealous converts were seized, and carried before Sabinus, the governor of Bythinia; who began their examination, with asking Lucian his name and station in life; Lucian soon satisfied both his demands, and declared, that he was now a preacher and defender of that faith, which he had formerly persecuted; upon the judge's enquiring by what authority he took upon him to preach; he replied, "that the laws of humanity and charity, obliged all men to endeavour the conversion of their neighbors, and to do all in their power, in order to rescue them from the snares of the devil."

Marcian's replies to the questions of the proconsul, differed nothing from those of his companion;

nion ; which caused Sabinus to reproach them both, with ingratitude to the gods ; from whom they had received so many favours : To which Marcian answered, to this effect, “ That their conversion was by the same grace which was given to St. Paul, who from a zealous persecutor of the church, became a preacher of the gospel.” The proconsul then advised them to consult their own security, by returning to what he called their duty, assuring them nothing but their compliance therewith, could gain them the favour of the gods, or of their prince. To this remonstrance, he was answered by Marcian ; “ That he and his companion could never be sufficiently thankful to that God, who had delivered them from darkness, and favoured them with the glorious light they now enjoyed.”

Sabinus hearing them thus magnify the power of their redeemer, asked them, why he had not preserved them from the hands of the magistrate ; and why, he did not rescue them from the sufferings, they were threatned with. The true glory of a Christian, replied Marcian, “ Is to lay down what you call life, that he may obtain eternal life, by his constant perseverance in the faith.” We heartily wish, continued he, that the Almighty would bestow upon you, grace and understanding ; that you might know the power of the being whom we obey, and might see his love, to all who truly believe in and serve him.”

The proconsul laughed at their expectations of future happiness ; and desired them to obey the imperial orders and sacrifice to the gods, before he proceeded to farther severities. Marcian then told him, “ they were ready to bear the worst he could inflict, and resolved to suffer any torments, rather than undergo the displeasure of the true and living God,” The judge now finding that he could prevail nothing, and only lost his
time

time and labour, in endeavouring to persuade them to leave their new religion, and to re-embrace their former one, which they had left; condemned them both to be burnt alive; upon which, they were immediately led to the place of execution, where being arrived and fixed to their stakes and every thing ready; before their departure they addressed themselves to their God and Saviour in the following manner; "Our praises, O Lord Jesus, must fall short of what we owe for our deliverance from Pagan errors, the happiness of suffering for your name, and the comfortable prospect of being joined with your saints for ever. To you be praise and glory for ever, Amen. Into thy hands, O blessed Jesus we commend our spirits." And thus they breathed out their souls, an offering made by fire unto the Lord.

TRYPHO and RESPICIUS, Martyrs, A. D. 251.

THESE were countrymen, and probably relations; their acts mention them as natives of the province of Bythinia, born at Apamea, where their ancestors had lived some time. They made so considerable a figure among the Christians, that in the beginning of Decius's persecution, they were both seized by order of Aquilinus, governor of that part of the country, loaded with irons, and conducted to Nice, where that magistrate resided, and thrown into prison, till he should be at leisure to try them. After some days confinement, they were brought into court, where they appeared full of the spirit, which animated and made them proof against all the power of their prosecutors.

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The governor's first questions to them were as usual, about their names and stations in the world, &c. to which they answered him distinctly, telling him, That their names were Trypho and Respicius, that they were well born, but that the Christian religion allowed fortune no consideration, as all things were governed by the divine Providence. One on the bench thinking to intimidate them, said, That the emperor had ordered all such to be burnt alive, as should refuse to sacrifice to the gods : to which Respicius replied, That he and his companion only wished they might be thought worthy to suffer in that cause, and desired the court to shew them no favour, but to proceed to the uttermost of their power. Aquilinus then endeavoured to persuade them, telling them they were of years to understand the reasonableness of what he proposed. Yes, said Trypho, we understand what we do perfectly well ; for which reason we are determined to remain true to Christ, and are resolved to contend for his name to the last drop of our blood. The governor again pressed them to conform to the religion of the empire ; but finding them resolved, ordered them to be put upon the rack.

This sentence was scarcely pronounced, but they expressed their readiness to suffer whatever cruelty they should inflict upon them ; by stripping themselves, and stepping forward with a surprising alacrity, they bore the torture for near three hours with admirable patience, speaking strongly of the power of the Almighty, and pronouncing his punishment due to idolators.

The governor then ordered them to be exposed naked in open air, and as it was the winter season, the severity of the frost disabled them from walking, or even standing, without great pain. When they had born that mortification for some time, they

they were presented again to the governor, who asked them, Whether they were yet inclined to alter their opinion ? and being answered in the negative, he ordered them back to prison ; assuring them, that if they did not comply with his proposal, they should be treated with the utmost rigour.

Aquilinus, soon after their commitment, made the tour of other cities, under his jurisdiction ; and at his return called for the two martyrs, whom he endeavoured to gain by words which seemed to express a tenderness for the persons before him, desiring them to consult their own interest before it was too late. Trypho answered, “ That their own real good was the only object of their thoughts, and that they could not follow his advice in any better manner, than by remaining firm in the profession of their faith.”

Aquilinus now finding all his endeavours vain, commanded their feet to be pierced with nails, in which condition they were dragged through the streets : but the strength of all holy martyrs supported them under their sufferings, and gave them a courage superior to the utmost malice of their enemies. Their patience greatly surprised the governor, who ordered them next to be whipped, which was done, till the tired executioners were obliged to desist.

This so enraged the magistrate, that he directed the officers to tear their flesh with iron hooks, and to apply lighted torches to their sides ; but they remained unmoved in all these torments. Aquilinus called to the executioners, ordering them to exert the utmost of their power on them ; but they continuing still superior to them. He again addressed them, and advised them to consider their own security : but Respicius assured them, That it was not in the power of words or blows to divert

vert them from their duty to God, and to engage them in the worship of senseless idols.

The next day they were again examined, and pressed as before to obey the emperor's edict, when Trypho assured the court, That they were not to be moved from their resolution of serving the living God, and obeying Christ. The governor passed sentence of death upon them, and they were immediately beheaded, on the first day of February, A. D. 251.

A G A T H A, Virgin and Martyr. A. D. 251.

SHE was a native of Sicily, descended from an honourable family, was endowed with all the advantages of nature, which can engage the admiration of the world, but could never persuade her to love it, her heart was devoted to a more worthy object, and the love of Christ, left no room for any rival.

The present persecution gave her an opportunity of shewing an heroic constancy to her heavenly spouse ; her virtue and beauty were her distinguishing characteristics among the Sicilian maidens, which put Quintian, the governor of that island, upon attacking her chastity, in order to corrupt her faith. He was a man very much addicted to his pleasures, and a bigot to the pagan religion, the precepts whereof laid no restraint on some criminal liberties in those who worshipped the gods.

Agatha, suspecting his design, left the town, but was discovered in her retreat, and brought to Catana. She finding herself in the power of one, from whom she justly suspected she might meet with the most dishonourable treatment, recommended herself to the protection of God, and confiding in her heavenly Lord Jesus Christ, prepared to meet death as her only relief.

Quintian determined to gratify the violent bent of his passion, gave orders to put Agatha into the hands of Aphrodisa, an infamous woman. She stayed with her almost a month, perpetually attacked by the solicitations of Aphrodisa, and her associates in wickedness, and the arts of debauchery, but remained firm in her resolution, begging of the Almighty to support her under this violent storm.

Aphrodisa finding he gained no ground, full of confusion and rage, went to Quintian, and told him all her pains were lost on her pupil, and that she was thoroughly convinced, it would be absolutely impossible for him ever to effect his design upon her. The governor, who knew Aphrodisa's skill in intrigues, had all along flattered himself with the hopes of receiving Agatha from her, obsequious to his desires.

This disappointment changed his lust into rage, he ordered her to be forthwith brought before him to give an account of her faith. Upon her declaring herself a Christian, he reproached her with a degenerate meanness of spirit, in stooping from the dignity of her birth to put herself upon the level with slaves, which was the best title he could afford the Christians. Agatha told him, That indeed she was a servant of Christ, and therefore was not ashamed to own herself his slave. Quintian was then urgent with her to sacrifice to the Roman deities, and threatened to force her to an act of Idolatry, if she would not perform it
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willingly. She without any emotion told him, That she had not that honourable opinion of the Pagan idols, which she thought so far from having any right to divine honours, that it would be an affront even to men to suppose them like those pretended deities. This answer so incensed the governor, being inflamed with zeal for his gods, that he ordered her to be struck on the face. But she persevering in her resolution, added, That she could not but think it strange, she should be pressed to adore those who are inferior to men.

This went no farther for the present, and Agatha was committed to prison, and was informed, she must either change her sentiments, or expect the most tormenting punishment for her obstinacy.

Quintian, supposing that a night's confinement might have made some impression on so tender a mind, ordered her again before him the next day. When she appeared, he asked her, Whether she had seriously attended to his former advice, and was disposed to save her life? To which she replied, That Christ was her life, and her salvation.

The governor finding the prison had no effect on her, now ordered her to be severely whipped, her flesh torn with hooks, and her sides burned with hot iron bars. The courage with which one of her age and sex, bore all these torment, amazed the spectators, as well as the actors in the tragedy; but it inflamed Quintian's rage so high, that he gave orders to cut off her breast. The holy martyr reproached him with his cruelty, but was still the same, and remained superior to all her tortures.

She was then remanded to her confinement, with orders to allow her neither food for the support of life, nor assistance to cure her wounds;

notwithstanding all which, the almighty was pleased still to preserve her life, to encrease her triumph. Four days after, the governor sent for her again, and pressed her compliance with the emperor's order; but finding her as averse as before, resolved to try the force of farther torments; and ordered her to be laid naked on live coals, mixed with broken glass, and the like. This was the last stage of her martyrdom; though the Almighty did not think proper to suffer her persecutor to enjoy the satisfaction of seeing her expire; she was carried back to prison, and there resigned her soul to him, who through all her sufferings she had so gloriously confessed to be her Lord and her God, her creator, her redeemer, her Saviour, and her exceeding great reward. Her death is by the generality of authors, fixt on the fifth day of February, A. D. 251.

CYRIL, Bishop of Gortyna, Martyr,
A. D. 251.

CYRIL was born about A. D. 166, but it is not certain, whether he was a native of Crete or of Egypt, his early education in the gospel, is a proof that he either descended from Christian parents, or had the happiness to fall into the hands of some Christians in his infancy: for, very early in his youth he had such an entire confidence in the promises made by Christ, that he frequently left his friends, and went in quest of the disciples of his Saviour. He spent a considerable time with many of that character, from whose instructions and example, he made great progress in the school of Christianity, always returning full of fresh zeal for

for the service of God, and the defence and propagation of the faith.

His daily improvements in knowledge and in the Christian graces and virtue, rendered him so conspicuous, that, at the age of thirty four he was consecrated bishop. The grace, he received with that apostolical character, appeared in a farther increase of wisdom, and good works, which made his flock happy under his care, for fifty years together. Taking charge of those who were committed to his care, was too confined an employment for his pastoral zeal, but he exerted himself so strenuously in enlarging the number, that he had the pleasure to see the fruits of his labour, and almost the whole town of Gortyna, the place of his residence, embraced the light of the gospel, and even those few who were still left in darkness, acknowledged his merit, and paid him all the respect due to a good and virtuous man.

The church of Gortyna, had enjoyed repose from the death of Severus, to the accession of Decius, which favourable interval of near forty years, Cyril had improved for the propagation of the gospel, and fortifying his flock, against the next storm that might fall upon them, which now happened, and began with his own person. Upon the imperial edict for persecuting the Christians being published, Lucius then governor of Gortyna, ordered the bishop to be apprehended, and pressed to sacrifice to the gods of the empire. Cyril was then near eighty four years of age: but his great age had no ways weakened his courage, or cooled his zeal. The governor seeing his resolution, acquainted him with the imperial mandate, which required all under pain of death to submit to its order; he advised him to pay some regard to his own grey hairs, and not to throw away the poor remains, of that little time of life, he had in the course of nature to enjoy: "That consideration,

replied the bishop, will be allowed no weight in the present case; I can never comply with your proposal, while I remember the irreparable consequences of acknowledging any God but him, who alone has a title to the name of God." Lucius, who was seemingly unwilling to destroy the venerable prelate, observed to him, that he had the character of great wisdom and experience, he desired that he should now give a proof of its being his due, by a seasonable obedience to the will of his prince; and thus by his example put others in a way of saving their lives, and doing their duty. To which Cyril replied, that the best proof of his wisdom he could give would be to secure his own soul, after he had taught so many how to save theirs; and to leave his spiritual children an example of constancy and courage, such as his profession required. The governor then put several more questions to him, in hopes of prevailing with him to change his mind; but finding him absolutely invincible, and being confounded with his answers, usually taken from the word of God, according to his blessed Lord's method, when attacked by the adversary of mankind; he proceeded to give sentence against him, in the following terms: "I order and appoint, that Cyril, who has lost his senses and is a declared enemy of our gods, shall be burnt alive."

The good man heard this sentence without expressing the least concern, and walked to the place of execution, with a cheerfulness which shewed he was full of the blessed hopes of gaining eternal happiness, as a reward for momentary sufferings; and expired with the praises of God in his mouth.

Antient martyrologies say that he died in the flame; but some later writers of the acts of his martyrdom tell us, that he was miraculously delivered, and that the fire burnt out without hurting him; and farther assure us, that the Pagans, who
saw

saw this prodigy, went immediately and acquainted Lucius therewith ; who, being convinced of the truth of his miraculous deliverance ; glorified the God of the Christians, and stopt all farther proceedings against the reverend prelate ; but hearing he employed his life in converting great numbers to the faith, he retracted his former clemency, and ordered him to be beheaded, which say they, was executed on the tenth day of July.

THEODULUS, and his Companions, Martyrs, in Crete, A. D. 251.

AMONG the governors of the Roman provinces, none was more active in executing the imperial edict against the Christians than the governor of Crete, which island soon became an aceldama, or field of blood. Among the many who fell a sacrifice to his aversion to the name of Christ, none were more conspicuous than Theodulus, Saturnius, Europus, Gelasius, Eunicianus, Zeticus, Cleomenes, Agathopas, Bastides, and Euaristus, who being brought before the governor, from different parts of Crete, united against the enemy in a way that has made their memory famous to posterity.

The three first were inhabitants of Gortyna, where they had, probably been grounded in the faith by Cyril their bishop ; the rest were brought from different towns in the island.

On the day appointed for their trial, as soon as they appeared in court, they were ordered to sacrifice to Jupiter, in obedience to the will and express command of the emperor. Upon their refusing to defile their hearts or hands, with such a de-

detestable act, the judge assured them they should be put to the severest tortures, while the rest of their countrymen, gave a loose to all the pleasures and diversions of a day dedicated to that God whose worship they declined. But they resolving to let no consideration deter them from their duty to the true God, answered, "that they should esteem all as they could suffer for the Supreme Being, as the most substantial pleasure they could enjoy in this world."

The governor attempted to engage their veneration for Jupiter, Juno, and Rhæa, by enlarging in commendation of these pretended deities: but as their stories, when told to the best advantage, is both absurd and ridiculous; his recital thereof gave to Theodulus, and the rest, an opportunity of making several remarks thereon, which could not be very agreeable to the governor, who stopped their mouths, by giving orders for them to be racked and tortured for their impious contempt of the gods.

The martyrs remaining the same unalterable asserters of the vanity of idols, and the dignity of the true God, though their bodies were torn in the most miserable and barbarous manner; the governor passed sentence upon them, and they were all ten beheaded at the same time near Gortyna: their last breath was employed in ardent prayers that the Almighty would preserve the faith of Christ in that country; of which the fathers of the council of Crete, A. D. 558, writing to the emperor Leo, observe, that their island had till then been guarded against heresy, which they seem persuaded was owing to the prayers of the ten martyrs.

Pity it had not remained so to this day; but, alas, it is now over-run with error and idolatry.

BABYLAS, Bishop of Antioch and Martyr, A. D. 251.

THE former part of this martyr's life is left in so much obscurity by the antients, that it must be passed over in silence ; but that he had a liberal education we have good ground to suppose, from the station he filled in the church, at a time, when none but men of learning, as no one else were fit for it, were advanced therein.

Zebinus, bishop of Antioch, dying about the year 237, Babylas succeeded him, and with great courage and conduct, governed that church in the midst of many and great difficulties, which arose soon after he was seated in his episcopal chair.

For, first of all, Sapor, king of Persia, invading the empire, over-run all Syria, and besieged and took Antioch, dreadfully oppressing the inhabitants thereof, more especially the Christians ; tho' they were not long before they were freed from this trouble, by Gordian the emperor, who with a great army coming into the East, recovered Antioch, restored peace in that city, and drove the Persians out of Syria, following them into their own country, and taking several places of consequence from the Persian king.

Babylas, as soon as peace was restored to his church, with great industry and faithfulness, attended his work, diligently preparing all to endure the greatest difficulties, to which they might be exposed, as if he foresaw the dreadful persecution which quickly broke out under Decius.

It was not long after his having published his edict against the Christians, that Decius himself came to Antioch, where, either out of curiosity, or perhaps with a worse design, he would fain have gone into a Christian assembly ; but this worthy
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and heroic bishop standing at the door, resolutely opposed him, telling him, "He would never willingly permit a wolf to break into Christ's sheepfold." Decius at that time dissembled his anger, not being willing to venture the rage of the people; but quickly after sent for Babylas, and having sharply reproved him for his insolence, commanded him to sacrifice to the gods as the only means to expiate his crime, and avert his punishment; promising also, upon those terms, to advance him to honour and renown: but the martyr, with a generous confidence in God, despised his offers, defied his threats, and declared his resolution never to apostatise from God, or change his religion to sacrifice to devils.

The emperor finding him inflexible, ordered him to be loaded with irons, and sent to prison, where he endured many severe sufferings, but rejoiced in all, pitying the misery of his persecutor more than his own.

The ancients are not fully agreed about the manner of his martyrdom, but Chrysostom and Suidas both tell us he was beheaded.

As he went to the place of execution he triumphantly sang, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee." Three young men whom he had educated in the faith, after great temptations to recant, went before him, steadfastly sealing their religion with their lives. When their heads were taken off, the bishop cried out. "Behold I, and the children, that the Lord hath given me." And then laid his own neck on the block, having first ordered his friends to bury his chains in the same grave with him. Eusebius, and some other authors are of opinion, that it was not this Babylas that was beheaded, but another of the same name, and that he died in prison; and many doubt of the story of his withstanding the emperor's entering into the church.

church, and ascribe it to the bishop of Nicomedia, of the same name. But, I chuse to adhere to the opinion of Suidas and Chrysostom, though the latter is something obscure in the affair.

We have no particular account where his body was first buried, but in the reign of Constantius, his bones were removed to Daphne near Antioch, and laid in a church built in the neighbourhood of the temple of Apollo, which occasioned one of the most remarkable occurrences of antiquity. The devil or his priests, did not it seems like his neighbour, being utterly struck dumb, and his oracle silenced thereby, as was intimated to the emperor Julian, when he came thither, to enquire after the success of his Persian expedition. The apostate upon this complaint of the devil, ordered the Christians to remove him. Upon which they assembled in great numbers, laid the coffin on an open chariot, and brought it triumphantly into the city, singing all the way, and at the end of every period, chanting out this stinging chorus, "Confounded be all those that worship graven images."

However this passage may entertain my readers, as seeming to favour too much of superstition, yet it is confirmed not only by Socrates, Sozomen and Theodoret, who all lived, near that time, but also by Chrysostom, who was an eye witness thereof, and often affirmed it in his preaching and writing, appealing to the knowledge of all persons then alive, challenging them if they could to contradict it, nor is it improbable, that God should suffer such an extraordinary thing at this time, to correct the infidelity of that emperor, and to give testimony to that religion, which he scorned and opposed with so much insolence and derision.

But, however Julian might be awed at present, yet soon after his rage broke out against the Christians, being gaulled with the before mentioned hymns

hymns. But while he was expressing his fury against Christ's followers, the displeasure of heaven was manifested against himself, and his proceedings, and the temple of Apollo in Daphne, suddenly took fire and in a few hours was reduced to ashes, together with the image of the god which resided therein. This the Christians ascribed to the divine vengeance, though their enemies charged them as the malicious contrivers of it; and some of the guards about the temple were exposed to the rack, to make them, accuse them, to confirm the suggestions, but they constantly affirmed, that the fire was kindled by a light from heaven. The substance of this story is not only alledged by Christian writers, but also by Marcellinus the Roman historian, and by Julian himself, in his satyr against the Antiochians, intitled Misopogon.

Besides these, were several other martyrs, who suffered for the faith during this emperor's reign, some sealing the truth with their lives, others after hard imprisonments, and many cruel tortures, escaping; while others forced from their habitations, wandered about continually in fear, and had no certain abiding-place, of whom we have but very little account.

Among the first class of these, is Alexander, bishop of Jerusalem, of whom we have before made mention in the fifth general persecution under Severus, where we took notice of his being made joint bishop of Jerusalem, with the aged Narcissus, A. D. 212. and having governed that see for forty years, to the first year of Decius, when he was apprehended in his old age, and being taken from Jerusalem, was carried to Cæsarea in order to his trial, where being brought before the judge, he made a noble and constant confession of his

his faith, was committed to prison, where he ended his life by the severity of the confinement.

Serapion, was seized in his own house at Alexandria, seemingly by the mob, put to various kinds of torments, and had almost all his bones broken ; after which they threw him head-long from an upper loft, and by that means compleated his martyrdom.

Julianus and Cronion, the former a very aged man, lame of the gout, and unable to walk, he was therefore carried to the place of execution, where he, together with Cronion, were laid on the backs of camels, and there scourged ; and at last thrown into a great fire, where they were both consumed.

A Christian, who stood by, taking their part against those who railed on them, and pitying their condition, was apprehended by the populace, and immediately dragged before the judge, where making a noble confession of his faith, he was ordered to be beheaded, which was forthwith executed.

Macar a Lybian Christian, was admonished and exhorted by the judge to deny his faith, but he strenuously refusing to listen to his proposals, and continuing constant in the profession of his faith, was burnt alive.

Heron Ater and Isidorus, Egyptians, and with them Dioschorus a boy of about fifteen years old ; were all brought before the judge, who beginning with Dioschorus, thinking him easy to be overcome by fair speeches, and rather to be enticed by words, than constrained by torments : But found himself greatly mistaken, for the Christian youth persisted immoveable, being neither to be

gained by persuasions, nor frightened by fear of punishments ; insomuch that the judge, amazed at his constancy, and the wise answers, that he made superior to his age, dismissed him. As for the rest, after they had suffered divers torments, and continued stedfast in the faith, they were committed to the fire, which put a period to their miseries.

Nemesion an Egyptian, he was first accused as a thief, but being acquitted, was accused of Christianity, and confessing his faith before the judge, was tormented, scourged and then burnt, with other condemned thieves.

Ischyryon was the servant of a nobleman, and chief magistrate of some town in Egypt, whose name is not mentioned in the Martyrologies ; he had not been long in the family, before his master required him to qualify himself for his post, by sacrificing to idols ; upon his first refusal, he severely reprov'd him, and loaded him with opprobrious speeches, which he redoubled on his persisting in his resolution. Provoked at the patience, with which the martyr bore all his ill language, he seized a sharp stake or pike, and in heat of passion run him through the body, and thus became himself the executioner of his own servant.

Venantius, was a native of Camerino, a city in Italy, who at the age of fifteen glorified God by martyrdom in this persecution.

As did also, forty Virgins at Antioch, who after having been imprisoned and scourged, were put to death, singing praises to God, and greatly rejoicing, that they were counted worthy to suffer for Christ's sake, and to be thus prepared by
passing

passing through the fire, to meet the heavenly spouse of their souls, in his glorious kingdom.

A. D. 251. Decius having built a temple in Ephesus, endeavoured to compel all who were in that city to sacrifice to the idols; when seven Christian soldiers of his own retinue were found, who refused to obey his command; of which they were accused before the emperor, by the names of Maximianus, Malchus, Martianus, Dionysius, Joannes, Serapion, and Constantinus.

The emperor himself endeavoured by persuasions or threats to induce them to comply, but could by no means prevail on them; he nevertheless granted them some respite to consider with themselves, and to give their final answer at his return from the expedition he was then setting out upon; this gave them an opportunity, during his absence, to hide themselves in a cave in the Mount Celius: at the emperor's return, he made great enquiry after them; and, at last, hearing where they were, he caused the mouth of the cave to be so closed up with stones, that they could not get out, where they all perished with hunger.

Theodora, a young virgin of Antioch, refusing to sacrifice to the Roman deities, was condemned to the stews to be prostituted, being taken thither, many inconsiderate young men flocked to the house where she was, among whom was one Didymus, a zealous Christian, who having disguised himself in a soldier's habit, entered the house, and coming to Theodora, secretly told her, who and what he was; advising her at the same time to change cloaths with him, and to get away; to this she consented, leaving Didymus to the rage and wonder of the people, who being at length found to be a man; he was presented to the president, to whom he confessed the whole truth;

and professing himself to be a Christian, he was condemned.

Theodora hearing thereof, came and presented herself to the judge, desiring the sentence to fall upon her as the guilty person, and that her innocent friend might be excused ; but the judge neither considering the virtue of the persons, or the innocency of the cause, inhumanely condemned both to suffer ; to be first beheaded, and then their bodies to be burned, which was accordingly executed.

Secundianus was accused to a captain of Decius's army of being a Christian, which he confessing, was ordered to prison ; as the soldiers were conducting him thither, Verianus and Marcellinus, two Christians, asked them where they were carrying the innocent ? Upon which they also were apprehended, and brought to the town of Centum-cellæ, where, being required to sacrifice, they spit upon the idols, for which they were condemned all three to suffer, when being beaten with staves, they were afterwards hanged on a gibbet, and there tormented with fire held to their sides, and at last beheaded.

Of others who suffered only torments, and escaped with their lives, I shall only mention two, tho' there were many of them ; but as they did not die martyrs, they are rather out of the design of this treatise ; of these was Aurelius, a worthy young man, and a Christian, who was twice tormented, for confessing himself to be a Christian, which he never denied, but boldly withstood all the force of torments upon him, and was in the end banished, but to what place history has not informed us.

Of the afflictions of this most barbarous and dismal time, none felt greater part of them, unless those who really died for the faith, than did the great and renowned Origen presbyter and catechist of Alexandria, against whom the devil raised all his forces, and levelled all his darts as against the most renowned champion in the Christian cause. In this persecution, at the age of sixty-four, he was apprehended, and thrown into a loathsome and uncomfortable dungeon, loaded with irons, his feet fet in the stocks, and his legs stretched to the utmost, for several days together; he was threatened with fire, and tried by all the torments that a merciless enemy could inflict, which falling upon a person of his age, and a body broken with infinite care and labour, must needs be inexpressibly burthensome, yet he bore all with a noble patience, and was ready to submit to the last fatal stroke, had it so been his lot: but the judge, to give all possible additions to his misery, ordered his torments to be such that should not take away his life, this last scene being suspended that he might be farther tortured; but it pleased God totally to prevent it, by putting a period to the life of Decius, and therewith in a great measure to the persecution.

Decius being dead, was succeeded in the empire by Gallus, in the beginning of whose reign the empire being greatly disturbed and harraled by the Goths, and other northern nations, the Christians enjoyed a little respite from persecutions, though the peace of the church was at the same time greatly disturbed by Novatian and his party.

A. D. 252. In this year, the empire being distressed with many disasters, as war, famine, and pestilence; the cause of all which was laid upon

the Christians; for which reason, Gallus resolving to imitate his predecessor in nothing but his crimes, revived the persecution against the Christians; and as he made no new edict of his own, but only commanded the old ones to be carried into execution, so this may be properly enough stiled, The seventh persecution; though I do not find any mention made at this time of any martyr of note, only the banishment of Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, and several other eminent priests, as Nemesianus, Felix, and some others, who being expelled their country, were sent to work in the mines, to whom Cyprian wrote a consolatory letter, exhorting them to constancy under their sufferings: however, Cornelius, bishop of Rome, suffered under this emperor, as did also his successor Lucius.

**CORNELIUS, bishop of Rome, and
Martyr, A. D. 252.**

UPON the death of Fabian, this bishoprick was vacant for the space of sixteen months. As the emperor Decius was an implacable enemy to Christianity, so nothing could exasperate him more against the church, than the choice of such pastors as were capable of propagating and supporting that detested religion, insomuch that Cyprian says, That Decius could better bear with a competitor in the empire, than the election of a bishop to the see of Rome.

However, about the year 251, Cornelius was by the clergy of that city placed in the episcopal chair: he was a member of the Roman clergy, a man of an irreproachable life, who had passed through

through all the functions of his character, and acquitted himself with uncommon fidelity and exactness, and so far was he from any ambition for the station in which he was now placed, that it was with the utmost difficulty that he was prevailed on to accept it.

He was scarcely fixed in his seat, but he was disturbed by a restless faction making head against him, under the guidance of Novatus, an African priest, and Novatian, a priest of the city, who opposed his title to the see, and raised a confusion in the church that was not easily remedied. Cornelius weathered this storm with great conduct and resolution, and went through the whole of these troublesome times with steadfastness and perseverance.

About the close of the reign of Decius, the persecution in some measure cooled; but was revived again by Gallus, in the year 252. At which time several parts of the empire being afflicted with the plague, Gallus, on that occasion, ordered sacrifices in all places to be offered to the Pagan deities, and enforced that blind and idolatrous worship, by edicts dispatched to different provinces. Upon the Christians declaring that they could not comply with the superstitious practices of the Heathens, and ask relief from devils, they were immediately judged to have brought this calamity upon the empire, by their contempt of the gods.

The storm began in Rome, where the vigilance and zeal of this holy bishop then appeared to great advantage, while he was allowed to remain with his flock; he animated them with great and pressing exhortations to the combat: and when he was obliged to leave them, he gave them a glorious example of invincible courage and constancy.

As soon as he was seized, great numbers ran to join him in the confession of the faith, and so edifying was his behaviour before the magistrate, that several who had proved frail in the late persecution, could now meet the most cruel torments, and death itself with pleasure, rather than renounce their Saviour.

Cornelius was banished to Centum-cellæ, now Civita Vecchia, about forty-five miles from Rome. But this not satisfying his enemies, he was afterwards cruelly scourged, and then beheaded on the fourteenth day of September, A. D. 252, after he had sat in the see of Rome one year, three months and ten days.

LUCIUS, Bishop of Rome and Martyr, A. D. 253.

LUCIUS is generally reckoned a Roman by birth, being the son of Porphyrius; he was admitted among the clergy at Rome, and made a considerable figure in the times of Fabian and Cornelius his predecessors. Upon the death of the latter, he was elected to succeed him in the see, which he did not enjoy any long time. Soon after his election, his courage and vigilance in asserting the truths of the gospel, made him obnoxious to the enemies of Christianity, and he was banished, but in a little time was allowed to return again. Upon his return to Rome, Cyprian in the name of all the African prelates, wrote to him, congratulating him and his flock upon that occasion.

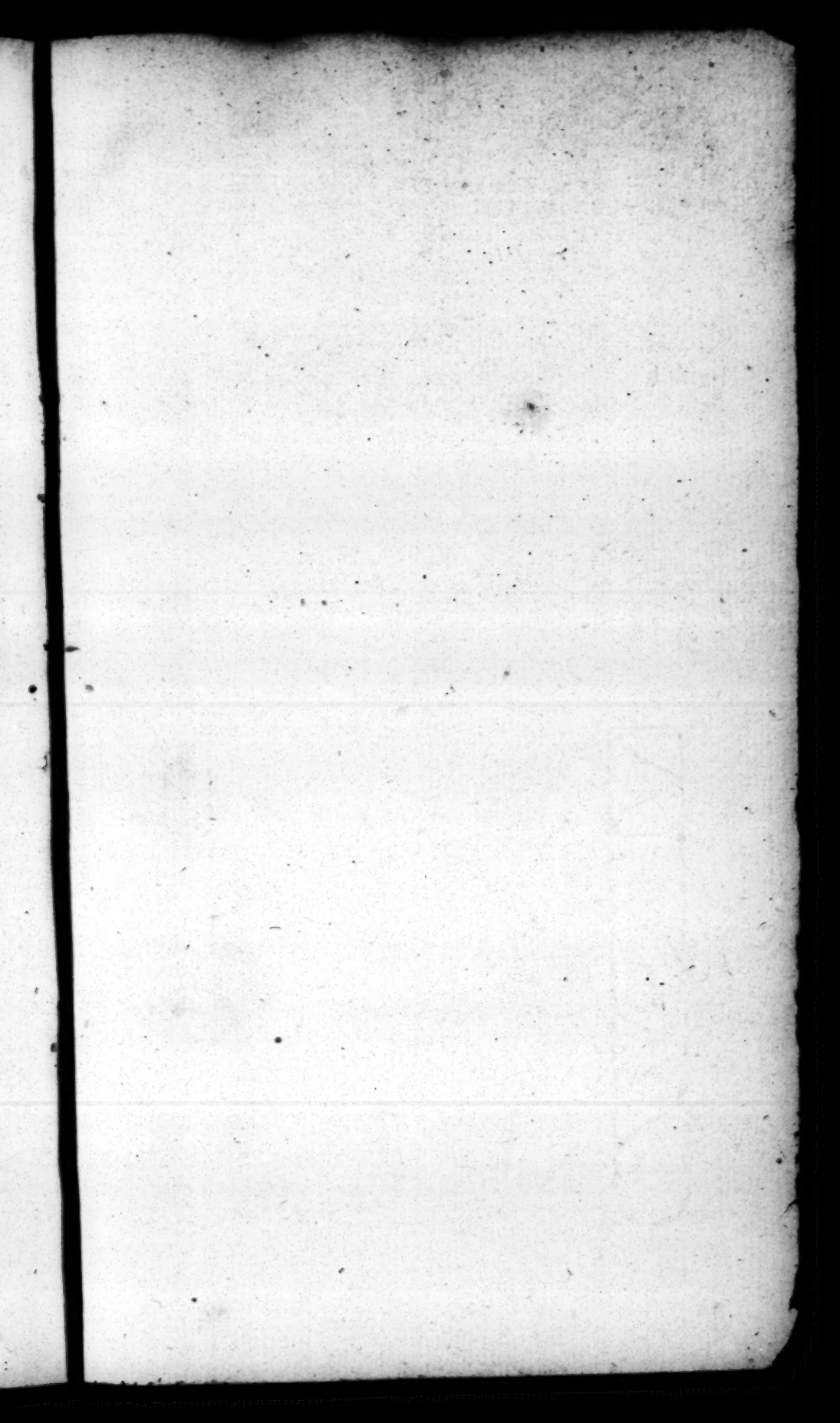
Not long after this he was again apprehended, and like his predecessor obtained a glorious martyrdom;

dom ; but whether by decolation or any other way is not recorded, though as that was the general method of the Roman executions, especially in regard to persons of any distinction, it is most likely he was beheaded. He held his dignity not quite six months ; and his death in the Roman martyrologies, is said to have been on the 4th day of March, A. D. 253.

Lucius was succeeded in his bishopric by Stephanus, a man of a warm temper, who continued in the see for about four years. And now the persecution drew to an end ; and Gallus, being shortly after slain by his general, Æmilian, whom the soldiers proclaimed emperor, it totally ceased ; and the church of God, after having endured the most terrible storm and conflict it had ever felt, and which, with some little abatement and intermission, had continued for almost four years, enjoyed a profound peace throughout the whole empire.

The End of the FIRST Volume.

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